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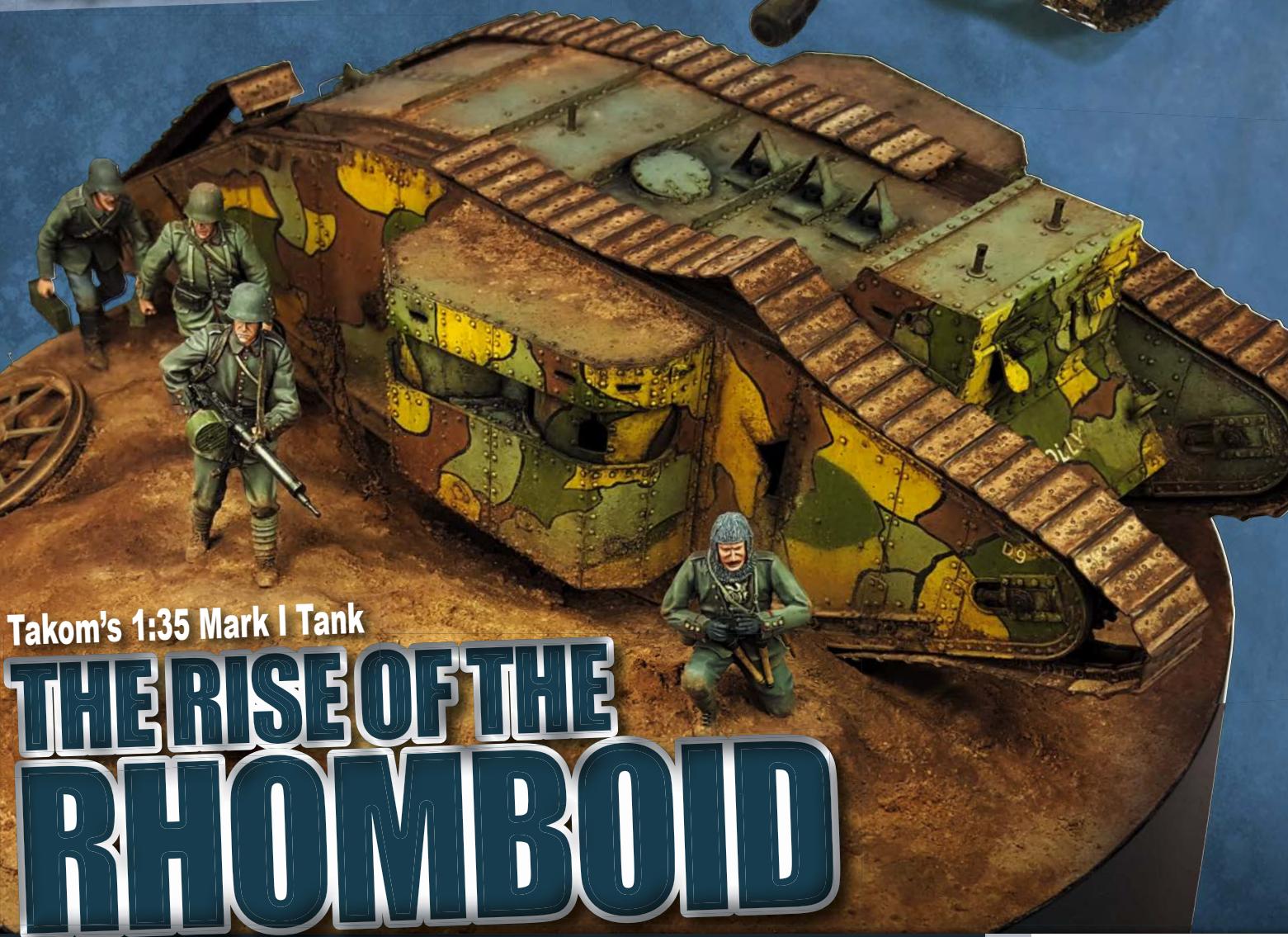
Model MILITARY INTERNATIONAL

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PANZER IV AUSF. G

Tamiya's 1:35 Panzer IV Step by Step

GREEN DEVIL
Tamiya's 1:35 IS-3



Takom's 1:35 Mark I Tank

THE RISE OF THE RHOMBOID

INSIDE: 1:35 Tunisian Tiger Initial ■ 1:35 M60A2 ■ 1:35 M4 Sherman ■ Show Report – Saumur 2016 ■ and more...

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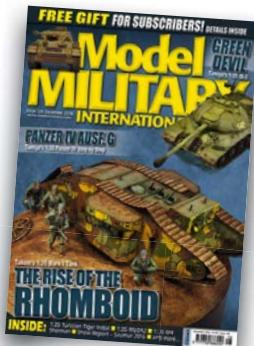
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BRAND NEW TAMIYA 1:35 M40 SPG

Tamiya has announced a forthcoming 1:35 scale model of the M40, a brand new subject for the Military Miniature Series. Only the suspension parts from Item 35346 are reused.

The M40 was a significant step in U.S. Army artillery mechanization, pairing the M1 155mm gun with the proven M4 Sherman chassis. Armour was light given its intended use as a long range weapon (they were effective up to 23.5km) away from the front line, while the layout was changed from the M4 to allow a big fighting compartment at the rear to accomodate the big gun. It was fitted with smooth horizontal volute spring suspension (HVSS). Over 400 were produced before the end of WWII; although they never fought in the conflict, one example of their T83 prototype did. The M40 served in the Korean War, and was eventually replaced by the M53.

About the Model:

- This is a 1:35 scale plastic model assembly kit. Length: 305mm, width: 91mm.
- Tamiya designers studied an M40 at the U.S. Army Field Artillery Museum in Fort Sill, Oklahoma for this highly accurate recreation.
- Realistic surface textures include cast differential cover and hull side steel plate.
- The big 155mm gun is recreated with aplomb:

where possible, the construction method of the actual weapon is copied. Depictions of hydraulic dampers include metal outer tubes for a super-realistic finish.

- The rear gate can be assembled up or down (when the gun was red it was usually down, and the crew on it or outside).

• Individual pulley parts are included. We will have more information about this exciting release in the next issue of MMI. Thanks to Tamiya for the information and images www.tamiya.com
Tamiya kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net



BRONCO 1:35 RUSSIAN ZIL-131 TRUCK

The ZIL-131 commenced mass production in 1967. It was planned to be a second-generation upgrade to the WWII ZIL-157.

Production of an improved ZIL-131 started in 1986.

In addition, a variety of panel vans, half-track and fire engines have also been based on this chassis, including a missile transportation type. It has also been used as one the BM-14 and BM-21 series of self-propelled rockets.

Bronco has now released kit number CB35193, a 1:35 scale Russian Zil-131 Truck (Early Version) with winch. We will have more news of this release in a coming issue of MMI. Thanks to Bronco for the information and images www.cn-bronco.com/en/index.php



DRAGON 1:35 HETZER WITH 15cm s.IG.33/2 HOWITZER

Dragon's 1:35 scale Hetzer family is being expanded with a number of new kits. The latest is the 15cm s.IG.33/2 (Sf) auf Jagdpanzer 38(t) Hetzer, which was a tracked infantry support vehicle. The gun mounted on a Hetzer chassis was the well-known 15cm s.IG.33/2 howitzer, Germany's standard heavy infantry gun throughout WWII. Czech manufacturer BMM converted six vehicles and built an additional 24 based on the Bergepanzer 38(t) recovery vehicle from December 1944 onwards. This vehicle featured a raised superstructure, while the mount and shield for the s.IG.33/2 was the same as that used on a self-propelled howitzer based on the Pz.Kpfw.38(t) chassis.

This new 1:35 scale kit required numerous new parts to pull off a realistic depiction of this vehicle. The kit has a brand new upper hull, superstructure, fighting compartment, idler wheel, storage bin and associated interior detail such as ammunition racks. Furthermore, two options are available to fit out the aft of the fighting compartment. At the rear is a new exhaust and muffler, which comes with a photo-etched guard. This self-propelled howitzer has hitherto never been available in plastic, so Dragon's creation makes yet another Hetzer variant readily obtainable by all.

This kit also features brand new NEO Tracks Plastic injection "NEO Tracks" w/pre-moulded lengths result in convenient assembly from minimum number of pieces but with full detail!

As well as the regular Hetzer tank destroyer already offered by Dragon, modellers can now add this support vehicle with heavy 15cm gun to their collections.



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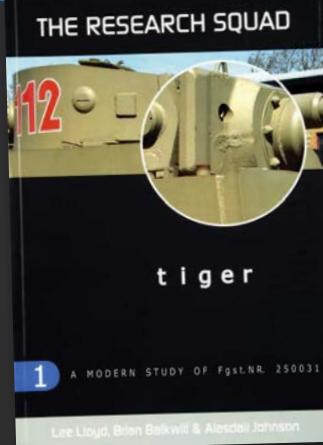
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- a technical article by Liejon Schoot and Rob Veenendaal on the Vorpanzer design

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Mark I tank "C19", "Clan Leslie" with grenade screens and rear steering wheel device photographed in 1916.



GENESIS OF THE MK.I TANK

Dan Moore discusses the development and baptism of fire of the Mk.I tank.

The British MK I Tank was born out of a need to somehow break the static stalemate that was the Western Front in WWI. The two vast opposing Allied and Axis armies were narrowly separated by a system of trenches and fortifications and warfare had generally stagnated into a war of attrition and defence.

A Lieutenant-Colonel of the British army, Ernest Swinton had witnessed first-hand from time spent in France just how costly infantry attacks had been against well defended and heavily armed defenders. One of the most dangerous opponents to the infantry was from barbed wire emplacements cunningly devised

to funnel attackers into enfilading kill zones. From his engineering background Swinton envisaged a tracked, armoured vehicle that could traverse the rugged and sometimes muddied battlefield, crush the barbed wire, and mop up any remaining defence.

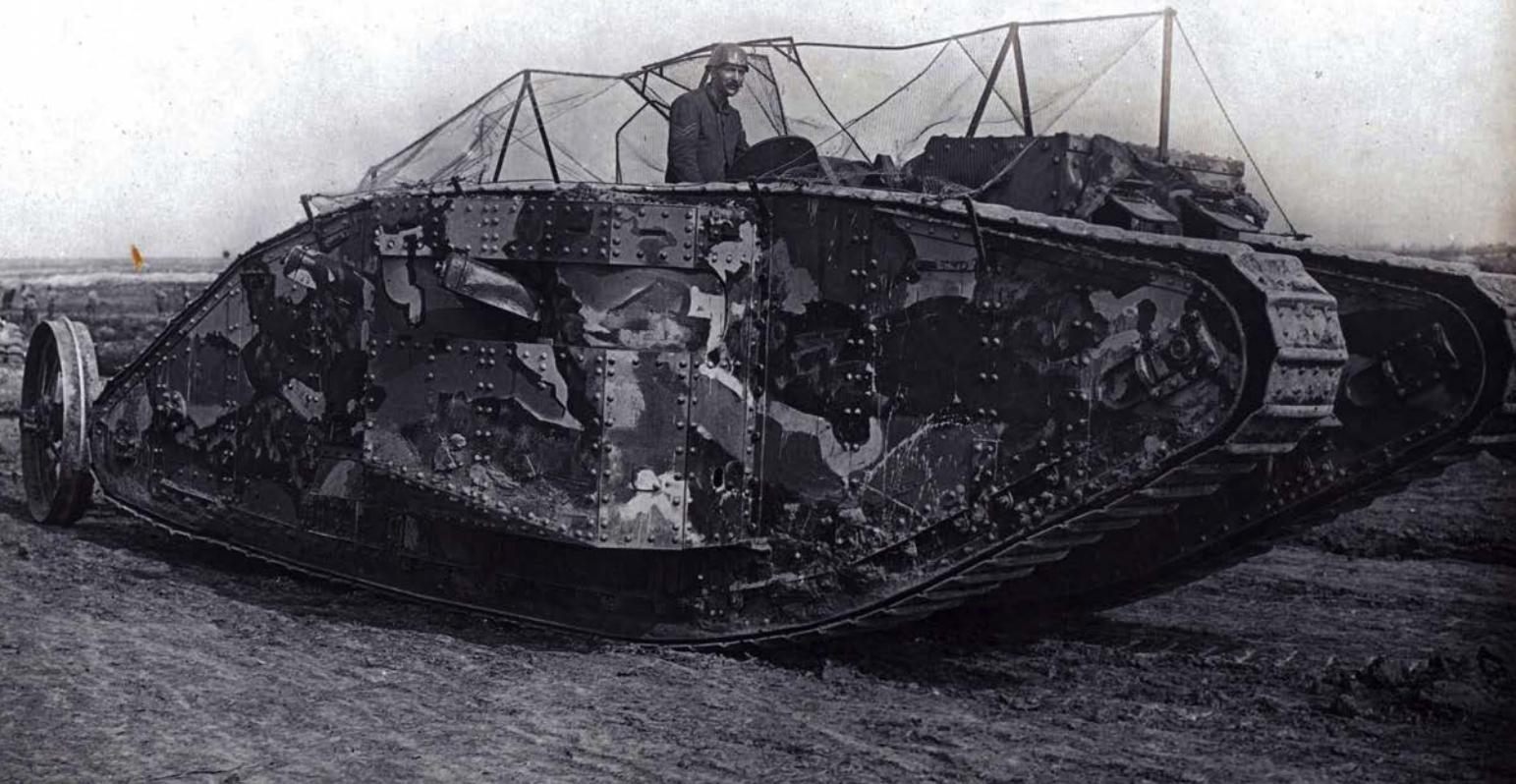
Through his contacts at Whitehall, Swinton's idea was passed onto the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill. Churchill's enthusiasm and backing led to a trial of several prototypes from a design team that featured two men soon to be remembered as the creators of the first-ever tank, William Tritton and Walter Wilson.

The trials led successfully to the creation of the MK.I's

Mark IV tank in action during 1917.



A Mark I tank during training at Elveden, Suffolk, 1916.



predecessors, "Little Willy" and "Big Willy", otherwise known as "Mother". After the trials had proven the tank was viable, the Army Council placed an immediate order for 100 machines (later extended to 150), half of which were to be "Male" featuring two 6 pdr cannons mounted in side sponsons, with the remainder to be "Female", featuring two Vickers 303" machine guns mounted in each of the side sponsons. Both versions also had Hotchkiss machine guns as supplementary firepower. The latter Female Mk.I specification is the subject of this build.

THE MK.I'S BAPTISM OF FIRE

The British Army had planned a massive offensive to take place in July 1916, otherwise known as the First Battle of the Somme.

Although the first Mk.Is had started trickling through in June 1916 to commence training they were ill-equipped for war. On the very first day of the campaign the Allies alone suffered an inconceivable 57, 000-odd casualties, with limited territory gains.

As the offensive dragged on through 1916 it was decided to try and break the deadlock

using the newest weapon in the British Army's inventory, the newly formed tank companies. To give the Mk.I's their first taste of combat it was decided to use them in an attack in the Flers-Courcelette region on the 15th of September 1916. This of course would go down in history

as the first ever use of the tank in combat.

Due to the lack of crew training and insufficient trialing, the Mk.I's unfortunately suffered a high attrition rate. However, in some instances the new beasts proved to be invaluable in knocking out strongpoints and mopping up

resistance.

The overall performance and success of the Mk.I despite its pitfalls was enough to convince the British Military that the tide had turned somewhat and placed an immediate order for more tanks to be built. ■

A Mark IV tank climbing a bank with a full quota of infantry riders.





Think Tank - Genesis of the Mk.I Tank

A camouflaged Mark I tank.



A British Mark V tank passes by a dead horse in the road in Peronne, France in 1918.



American photographers Sgt. Morris and Pvt. Persse going into the battle lines on a British Army Tank. On a battlefield in France between Villeret and Bellicourt. This is an unarmed Mk IV supply tank.



Freikorps use a captured British Mk.IV tank to put down the Spartacist Uprising in Berlin, 1919.

Mark IV series tank on 5th Avenue in New York City to promote the sale of war bonds.



A British Army Mark V tank rams a sealed premises on Capel Street, Dublin, 18 January 1921, during destructive house searches by the UK Occupation Forces in Ireland.



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Graham Tetley is impressed with Dragon's new 1:35 scale Tunisian Tiger.

BLOOMING BRILLIANT!

Back in 2005 Dragon released, under the Cyber Hobby brand, a DAK Tiger which, at the time, was the best representation of this vehicle done in plastic. Being limited edition though, it quickly sold out and it has taken Dragon ten years to follow up, but we now have another Tunisian Tiger with lots of Dragon's lovely new tooling.

In this kit we have parts that will enable the builder to represent the Tigers that served with the 501st Battalion in Tunisia. Only 20 of these vehicles made it to North Africa and they had had unique features (front & rear mudguards, misaligned side mudguards, smaller tow cable eyes, exhaust shields, wider turret bin and different road wheels) which this kit depicts beautifully.

As usual, once you have finished admiring the beautiful Ron Volstad artwork, the box is brim full with sprues. A lot of this kit uses the sprues from the earlier Wittman 'SO4' (6730) and Bovington Tiger 141 (6820) but there are many new parts here. We get a full sprue including most of the changes, with additional sprues including the new road wheels & mudguards, new hull top and some tweaks to 'Sprue G' to give us the towing eyes. Moulding quality throughout is superb with no flaws on my model at all and detail is crisp and sharp with no visible knock-out marks anywhere.

A new photo-etched fret gives us the mudguard ribs and headlight support strips amongst others, plus there are pre-shaped engine screens and metal wire for the headlight cables.

Tracks are provided in DS plastic of which regular readers know my thoughts - I have already acquired a set of the lovely Rye Field Model Early Tiger tracks for this kit. Decal options for five vehicles are provided.

CONSTRUCTION

The basic construction of this kit follows the same method and uses the same parts as the Wittman 'SO4' kit that I built & reviewed previously. The same comments will therefore apply so I won't repeat the same words.

Once again, Dragon sees fit to provide most of the photo-etch for areas underneath the engine deck that cannot be seen on the finished model and retain that poor way of attaching the gun to the breach by using Parts A4, A29 & A9 that don't fit together.

The same air cleaner hoses & mounts are provided and I found that these cannot be built as per the instructions because there are no positive location keys on the parts. You can only complete them when the hull is together and the air cleaners installed - only then do you have the positive locations needed.

Dragon give us some twisted metal wire for the towing cables but a quick test-fit shows this to be too thick to fit the new (smaller) cable ends. I find Dragon's metal cable too inflexible anyway so it will be replaced with twine. But that's it for the bad news!

The new fenders are correctly placed to have that kink in them and we get some extra mounts on Sprue 'R' to slice off and use on the front glacis. Also, we also have to slice off one of the armour plugs that Dragon thoughtfully provides if you want to depict '724' with its battle damage repaired.



Decal options.



New etched fret.

INSTRUCTIONS

These are very busy simply because there are five vehicle options in the kit and each one has its peculiarities. There are some mistakes relating to the front and corner mudguards but rather than me explain just have a look at David Bryden's excellent 'Tiger1Info' site at <http://tiger1.info/models/products-page/DR6608>

Mr Bryden also points out that, if you are modelling Tiger 122 then the exhaust shields in the kit are incorrect. I am not aware of any aftermarket versions so if it is a concern modifying the kit parts will be your only option. These first Tigers also had their hull numbers painted on the front mudguard and whilst we get decals for these, Mr Bryden points out some errors in the instructions and tells us the correct hull number for the version to be modelled.

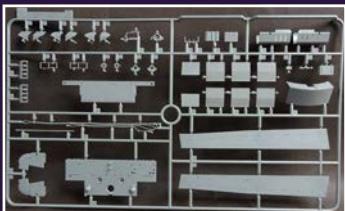
CONCLUSION

In this kit, Dragon has undoubtedly given us the most accurate out of the box Tunisian Tiger to date. Yes, there are some niggles but, as I like Tunisian Tigers, I have purchased another 2 of these kits to do a few versions.

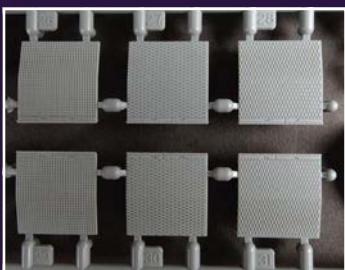
The level of research that has gone into it is outstanding and, out of the box, it is superb. Take your time with construction, study the instructions and test fit & plan ahead - it will all be worth it.

The verdict? Blooming brilliant! ■

Thanks to The Hobby Company Limited for the sample www.hobbyco.net



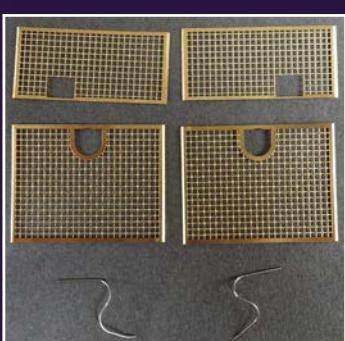
Most new bits found here.



Optional front mudguards.



New rear plate.



Etched mesh and headlight wiring.



Lucky new road wheels.



Detail - and flash - on the DS Tracks.



Close-up of the exhaust shields.



STARSHIP!

Based on the M60 chassis, the M60A2 featured a new turret mounting a 152mm main gun that was capable of firing the MGM-51 Shillelagh anti-tank missile as well as conventional rounds. Entering service in 1972 the complexities involved in the design and technology of the time meant that the tank wasn't a resounding success so it was eventually phased out in the early 1980s. Remaining M60A2s had the turrets scrapped and were either reworked as M60A3s or used as the chassis for the AVLB (Armoured Vehicle Launched Bridge).

Newly released by Dragon, this is their attempt at the 'Starship' and in the box you get eight sprues of grey styrene, one clear sprue, a small etched set, a small decal sheet and two lengths of DS vinyl track.

As is usual with Dragon, all parts are cleanly moulded with little to no flash with the exception of the tracks, which have some flash plus fine mould seam lines that will be difficult and very time consuming to remove. The tracks are the early T97E2 type that were fitted to M48s and M60s.

Details are good, however the kit shares a lot of parts from their earlier M48 and features two fuel filler caps on the upper hull (there should only be the one on the right for the M60), the rear engine grill is from an M48A5 and is different to the M60, the CBSS (Closed Breech Scavenging System) 'bulge' on the lower rear hull is undersized compared to photos of the real vehicle, the top loading air cleaners are the armoured ones rather than the earlier un-armoured type (there are other air cleaners

marked as not for use but these are the side-loading type fitted to the M48), there are no canvas covers included for the main gun or the gun mount on the cupola, the turret looks too 'square' at the top and lacks the tow cables mounted on it (even though this is shown on the box art), there is no interior detail and the 152mm gun barrel supplied is the later type without the bore evacuator.

The good bits are that the road wheels depict the aluminium type with the reinforcing fins which is fine for the A2 version, and the hull and turret feature nicely done cast texture as well as etched bits for the turret basket.

Painting and decaling options are limited to just two vehicles from the 1970s in the four colour MERDC scheme with colour call outs from the Mr Hobby range and their equivalent in Model Master paints shown on the instructions. One of the Mr Hobby colours mentioned in the three-view drawing is not listed in the instructions so there is no Model Master reference (by the way H73/23 is a dark green mixed with H6 black).

Dragon has made a bit of a mess of this one unfortunately but the problems are fixable as the rear engine grill just needs the rectangular lumps at the top, bottom and in the centre removing, the indent for the filler cap on the left needs filling and the surface re-texturing with Mr Surfacer or similar.

Trickier to fix though is the CBSS bulge on the rear hull as this will need to stick out more, the air cleaners need backdating to the earlier type, a replacement barrel with the bore evacuator (DEF Model did one) would need to be found and the canvas covers

for the gun mantlet and the MG mounted in the cupola would need adding. Also there are a few detail differences such as the amount of lifting lugs on the lower hull sides, some drive sprockets had the lightening holes and some didn't, some were fitted with T142 tracks as well as the T97 type so you really need to base your model on an actual vehicle.

I know all kits have their problems one way or another but considering the retail price of this one it's naughty that Dragon didn't do their research properly or were just too lazy and thought it okay just to use parts from their earlier M48.

To sum up, if you want something that looks like an M60A2 then this kit is okay, but if you want an accurate vehicle then either get hacking with a modelling knife or wait for the inevitable aftermarket correction set. I just hope the rest of the promised M60 family is better. ■



Markings are supplied for two vehicles.

References:

Tankograd American Special No.3022 'M60A2, M60A3 and AVLB' by Carl Shulze
<http://afvdb.50megs.com/usa/pics/m60.html>

Thanks to The Hobby Company Limited for the sample
www.hobbyco.net



Drive sprockets.



The road wheels correctly depict the aluminium type.



Upper hull.



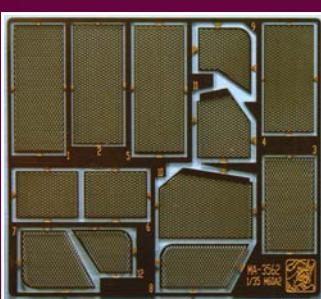
Rear vent detail.



The turret upper shell



Turret side view.



The kit's photo-etched fret.



DS tracks.

THE RISE OF THE RHOMBOID

TAKOM MK.I FEMALE "GUEUDECOURT" TANK DIORAMA

Dan Moore builds Takom's Mk.I Tank and groundwork, and Jamie Degenhardt brings us the figures.





The side frame used as a jig to align the centre panels. A little care & patience is required here.



The idler wheels trapped between the side frames. These were glued in place prior to attempting to join the two track frames per side

After receiving the newly released Takom Mk.I Female in the post as a Christmas present I couldn't wait to unwrap her & start building.

As this year is the 100th anniversary of the Tank's baptism of fire I thought it would be appropriate to build a vehicle that had participated in this momentous occasion. After researching the various vehicles and tank companies I decided to represent a vehicle that belonged to "D" company, tank D9 "Dolly" commanded by a 2nd Lieutenant V.Huffam.

This tank had been ditched and recovered on the 15th of September Flers battle and then participated and was knocked out in the attack on the next objective, Gueudecourt, on the following day.

After I started to build the vehicle I realised that it would be more interesting to sit the vehicle in a period setting via a small diorama. As this particular vehicle was lost for some time in No-Man's Land I thought it would be reasonable to assume that a German MG squad may have passed the tank at some stage. Due to the lack of WWI Imperial German figures available I had some difficulty locating a suitable MG crew, however MasterClub from Russia had some figures available that fitted the bill and were duly ordered online. Good friend and fellow modeller Jamie Degenhardt kindly offered to paint up the MG team and the figures were duly cleaned up and delivered along with the relevant references for Jamie to work his magic painting wand over.

IN THE MK.I'S BOX

Upon opening the kit box the modeller is faced with a seemingly daunting amount of parts. However, this did not prove to be the case as a large proportion of the parts are actually left over from Takom's earlier MK.IV releases. The parts are moulded

in a nice, pale grey finish and are very well rendered.

Takom's usual habit of providing an abnormal amount of sprue gate joins doesn't seem to be the case in this instance and really weren't too much of an issue at all, with most joins being in areas that were easily cleaned up.

The click-together tracks are supplied in their own bag and are almost ready to use straight away.

A small etch fret for the upper exhaust covers is supplied for extra finesse. The kit instructions supplied are in an easy to read book format.

Decals are supplied for one marking option, with another two unmarked camo scheme options also presented on a small booklet courtesy of the ongoing collaboration with Mig AMMO.

The entire presentation is not unlike similar offerings by Meng.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE 1 - CENTRE BODY AND SIDE UNITS

Steps 1-19 are concerned mainly with building up the main centre body of the Mk.I, the two side rhomboid frames and their associated drive units. I diverted slightly from Takom's instructions in that I used one of the rhomboid track frames as a jig to align all the centre panels, fitting one at a time and flowing a very small amount of Tamiya Extra Thin cement along the join, taking care not to join the panels to the side frame itself.

I would advise to allow each panel to dry before continuing onto the next, this ensures a rigid, aligned structure. I did however refrain from gluing the main roof panel to the other panels as I wanted to ensure a snug fit once the two side rhomboid units were joined to the centre structure. Probably one of the more annoying aspects of a tank of this design is the sheer number of idler wheels - Takom keeps the modeller busy here, with 3 parts making up each idler assembly. This equates to some 162 small pieces to clean up. In theory as this area is not really



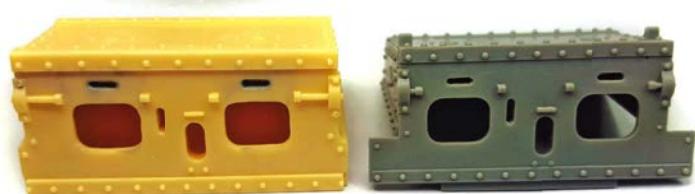
The spare Mk.IV sprockets modified to simulate the front toothed MK.I idlers. The internal hole pattern is different however is not seen on the finished vehicle.



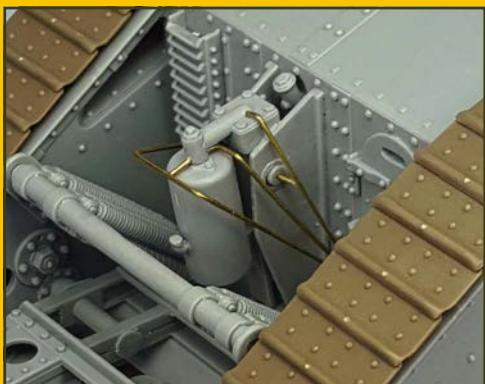
The side sponsons built as separate structures. Note the replacement door handles from brass rod.



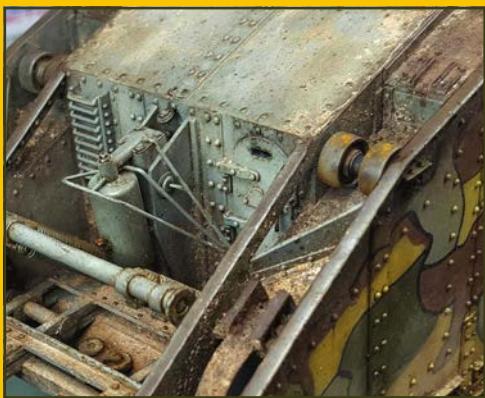
The Vickers MG shields. These need to be glued & thoroughly sanded for a smooth, cylindrical appearance.



MR Modellbau's resin cab on Left, Takom's example on right. Can you spot the difference?



The rear steering tail's hydraulic ram. Plumbing was added from brass rod bent to shape.



The same area after painting & various weathering effects applied.



Close up of the MR Modellbau replacement cab fitted and other details added. Also note the nicely rendered resin Vickers MG.

seen you could just cut the wheels and axles straight off the sprues and glue them to the vehicle, however I took the plunge and cleaned up all the parts. I glued each idler assembly to the side frames as I would not be requiring the wheels to turn, this made the task of joining the side track frames to the centre structure that much easier, without having to align the floppy idler axles.

The large front idler wheels are supplied as being smooth - this is correct on Mk.I's that saw later service in the Gaza battles however are not appropriate to the earlier Flers era. Luckily, Takom gives the modeler the large toothed sprockets from the MK.IV that can be used, with the only issue being two new axles to make up.

Takom's excellent click-together track links needed only a light sand on each link to remove the moulding pip and then can be joined together as per the instructions. These track runs are very robust, and can be added and removed from the vehicle with a little care at any stage.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE 2 - BODY AND FITTINGS

With the two rhomboid side units essentially complete it was time to join them to the centre structure. I did not have any troubles with fit whatsoever, however I must stress that this sort of kit requires patience and a constant test-fit of parts.

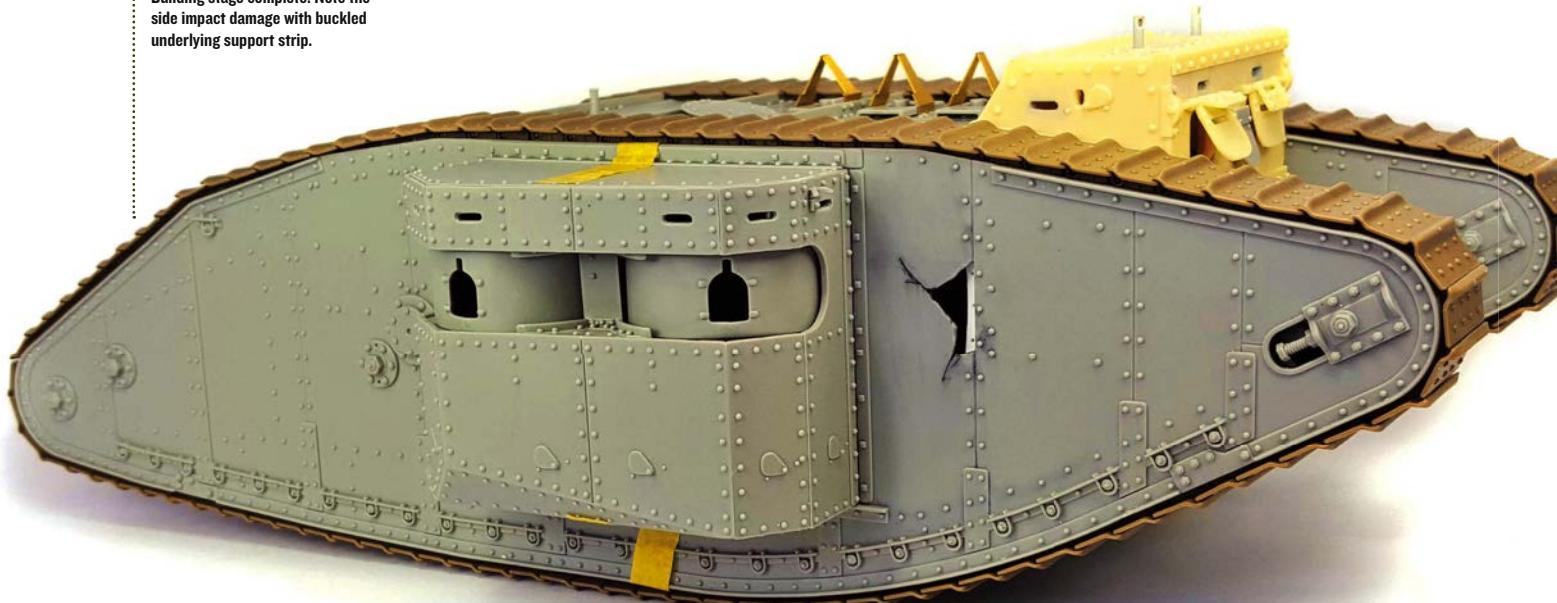
Up next were the two side sponsons, once again I diverted somewhat from Takom's instructions by using the side panels as jigs. Again, I must stress to the modeller to test-fit and test-fit again to get a satisfactory join to the panels. These sponsons were set aside as separate units to enable easy painting later on and had exterior access door handles replaced from brass rod.

The semi-circle Vickers MG shields are supplied as two separate parts, these need to be glued, aligned and sanded thoroughly to achieve a smooth look.

Takom has supplied the driver's cab as a multi-piece unit that looks the part, however this cab is far too narrow width-wise for an accurate Mk.I and is much more appropriate for a later Mk.II or later variants. Luckily, at the time of this build the German aftermarket firm of MR Modellbau had released a resin replacement cab (No. MR-35519) to suit the Mk.I which was duly purchased and used.

This resin cab proved a reasonably easy job to graft onto the roof, however did require some shaving down on the sides for a snug fit. After removing the necessary areas of the hull roof it was glued into place. The cab set also provides new replacement Vickers MG's should you wish to fit them. As my chosen vehicle from period accounts had its MG's removed after being knocked out I only ended up using one of the weapons.

Building stage complete. Note the side impact damage with buckled underlying support strip.

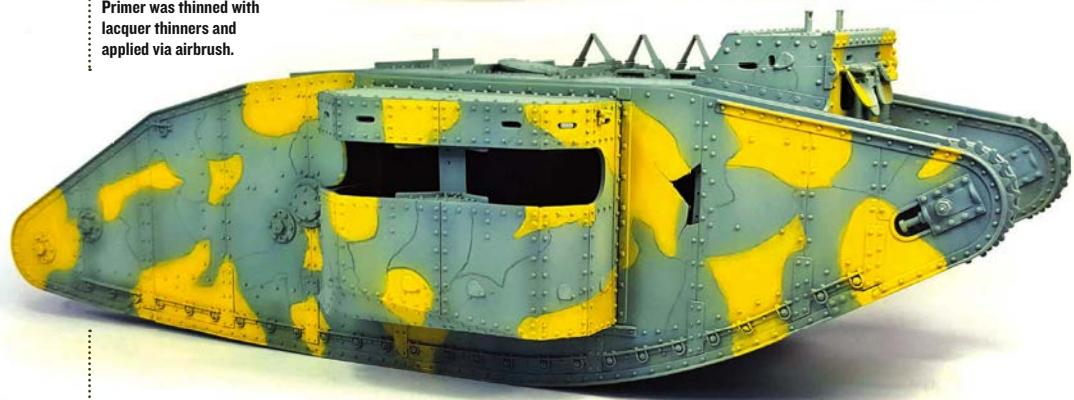




Another view of the completed Mk.I. Note the damaged rear steering tail.



Tamiya Liquid Surface Primer was thinned with lacquer thinners and applied via airbrush.



Ochre Splotches on.



The Solomon scheme complete. It's all very bright at this stage, however with the weathering to commence the colours will be toned down somewhat.

FINISHING STEPS

To finish off the building stages, the rear steering tail wheel assembly was built up as per the instructions. Due to the size limitations of the diorama base and the fact the tail assembly would stick out of the diorama's side I decided to simulate the tailwheel assembly as being badly damaged by shellfire, as this was a widely reported occurrence.

The rear Hydraulic ram used by the Mk.I to lift and lower the tail had its protective shield left off, as these too were not used in the earlier Flers battles. As per an excellent 3D image rendering available on the Landships II website I used brass rod to add the various hydraulic piping to the ram assembly.

This adds necessary detail to the area and makes it look a little busier. The external fittings and hatches were also added at this stage.

VEHICLE SPECIFIC

One feature of knocked-out MK.Is is that because of the limited ballistic durability of the primitive armour most pictures depict the plating as to have shattered, rather than bend or have clean holes when struck by shell fire.

D9's commander Huffam reported that prior to the crew evacuating the vehicle D9 was struck on the left hand side sponson by shell fire and several holes became evident, followed by a heavy blow to the main body of the vehicle.

As no known photographs exist of D9 in this condition I felt I was allowed a little artistic licence, so I set to work simulating shell fire damage by drilling a series of small holes and working the area with a sharp knife. The idea was to simulate the shattered and cracking armour so easily seen on D9's sister tanks knocked out in the Flers battles.

On the right hand side of the vehicle I simulated a larger impact, with the side plating's underlying support strip shown minus its rivets and slightly buckled. At this point Takom's Mk.I was largely complete and ready for paint.

I must say I was a little apprehensive when I first cracked open the Mk.I's box, but I can honestly say it was an enjoyable and speedy build from start to finish, with nothing being out of the ordinary for the modeller.

PAINTING BEGINS

The painting stage of the build began on the inside areas of the MK.I with a coat of Tamiya Flat Black so the grey plastic and



The PVC pipe cut at an appropriate angle. This was to add some drama rather than a dead flat base.



All the Diorama elements test fitted to the base.



The damaged rear tail assembly. Takom did a great job here, the unit is very nicely detailed.



Anyone for pie? The base prior to the pigment treatment.



The filler and pigments used on the diorama base.

◀ creamy resin couldn't be seen through an open hatch or hole. This was followed by my customary practice of an airbrushed coat of Tamiya Liquid Surface Primer diluted with Tamiya's own lacquer thinners to seal in the photoetch and other materials while also providing a decent primer for the subsequent camouflage painting.

There has been a considerable amount of research over the years as to the exact colours and camouflage schemes exhibited by these primitive vehicles. The vehicles within "D" company appear to exhibit examples of the well-known exotic Solomon scheme (designed by the artist Solomon J. Solomon) however in certain images the camo scheme appears to show some sections also bordered by black bands. As no period colour images exist of the scheme, apart from personal accounts and coloured black & white interpretations I decided to use most of the mentioned colours, these being hues of Ochre, Iguana Green, Grey and a Mottled Brown bordered by the black bands.

A decent AWM photograph of D9's sister tank D17 "Dinnaken"

was used as a reference for the colour segment placement.

Some pre-shading was applied to certain areas with Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black. The light grey was easy enough to apply as an overall airbrushed layer of XF-66 Light Grey, with highlights of XF-80 Royal Light Grey.

Next up were the main camouflage colours. I did mull over how to go about doing this for some time, as usually I would refrain from trying to hand paint AFVs. In this instance, I couldn't really see how I could avoid it. So, out came the Vallejo Air range and the trusty paint brushes.

After lightly drawing the camo splotch scheme outline with a pencil it was then just a matter of "paint by numbers". As the lightest colour, Vallejo Air Yellow Ochre was applied by a decent brush in several thin coats.

The splotches were then carefully filled in with the same colour applied via airbrush. Next was Russian Green followed by Rust, this simulating the other colour shades mentioned in period accounts. Once all the colours were touched up here and there

with the airbrush, it was time to seal it all in with a coat of Tamiya clear.

DECALS ON

The decals were a simple affair. As the early Mk.I's had few markings, some generic Archer Dry Transfer numbers and letters were used for the D9's. Some slightly larger font letters were found and used for the Dolly nickname on the front plate.

WEATHERING BEGINS

An overall pin wash around all raised details and recessed lines kicked off the weathering stage. Mig AMMO's Africa Korps Wash (MIG-1001) is a handy product for this task. Different shades of Mig Abt.502 and Windsor & Newton oils were used to create worn areas and general discolouration to the underlying paintwork. White, Black, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Raw Umber and Olive Green were all used to simulate wear and tear. The oils were blended in and manipulated with a fine brush dampened with white spirit to form scuffing, scratches and the like.

On areas where some dust or dirt were required, different shades

of earth coloured Mig pigments were either stippled on dry or built up and fixed with AK's Pigment Fixer (AK 048).

The lower hull had a decent layer of pigments applied and sealed in with fixer, as did the top of the sponsons where dirt and muck would be thrown thanks to the tracks. When the pigments were totally dry, dark heavily thinned oils were flicked onto the dirt areas by using a worn out brush. This gave a more realistic appearance and added some tonal variation.

To seal in all the previous weathering and give the vehicle a nice dull finish it required several coats of AK Ultra Matte Varnish thinned with AK's own acrylic thinners.

WEATHERING TRACKS

The track runs received an airbrushed base coat of a mix of Tamiya's X-18 Semi-Gloss Black and Gunze H406 Chocolate Brown. The tracks then received a decent layer of earth coloured pigments. I created various effects by making up a batch of light, medium and dark shade of pigments to vary the dried mud/dirt effects on

the tracks. Every few track links another shade was used to vary the effect. The pigments were then sealed in with AK pigment fixer. To add a worn steel effect to wearing edges I added ground graphite by way of the venerable Mk.I finger.

DIORAMA BASE AND GROUNDWORK

While discussing the diorama idea at my local modelling meet it was suggested that perhaps a decent sized piece of large PVC plumbing pipe may make an ideal base. A suitable length of 250mm pipe was duly purchased at a local plumbing supply outlet and was cut with a hacksaw to the right dimensions. To add a sense of drama to the diorama the top of the base was cut at a sharp angle to simulate the unfortunate fate of the Mk.I after its fall into a sloping shell hole or similar.

The bottom of the base was sealed with a circle of Corflute cut to size and glued in. The exterior surfaces of the diorama received several coats of an aerosol acrylic semi-gloss Black to achieve a nice sheen.

To shape the terrain of the diorama foam was cut to size and squished into the pipe. After gluing the edges with superglue I could hack away at the foam to create undulations and other terrain features.

Prior to painting D9, I fitted the tank and fully assembled figures to ensure everything was going to work together, this took several attempts to achieve what I thought was a believable scene.

As mentioned previously I discovered that the long steering tail of the Mk.I was going to overhang the base considerably. After consulting many reference photos and accounts of destroyed Mk.I's it was obvious that the steering unit was frequently damaged or simply blown off. So, with much trepidation the rear steering unit was attacked and more damage added to the unit to simulate having been hit by a shellfire.

Due to being nicely detailed I used one of the large, spoked steering wheels as yet another component on the diorama base.

TIME TO DISH THE DIRT

After I was happy with the final sit of the diorama elements it was time to lay some mud and dirt on. In this case I didn't want the base to be the typical Western front slop fest - It had to dry out at some stage!

Selleys "Spakfilla" was used for a dried mud base, this product is readily available at most hardware stores and is usually used as a wall ►



The figures feature slightly differing uniform patterns & equipment.



Hornet replacement heads were used on the MG crew, these being far better defined.



A close view of the completed grime.



Detail on the hull roof.

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Letters were sourced from Archer Fine Transfer rub-down sheets.



Barbed wire is a must for WWI dioramas!



The Takom tracks are one-piece click together parts – easy and effective.



One of the sponson machine guns.

► filler for home handyman repairs or similar and is handy for these kind of modelling jobs.

The filler was applied using the tool supplied with the product carefully over the foam base. The drawback with this system is that until the product is fully set and hard it is very easily cracked or damaged. While the filler was drying all the figures, tank and other accessories were set into the base in their appropriate positions to leave an impression.

After the filler had set the base resembled a somewhat dodgy pie!

Various blends of MIG Pigments were heaped on to the base and set using AK Pigment Fixer. The process was sped up somewhat by using a hairdryer to dry the pigments. After the pigments had dried more dry pigments were added for a patchy look.

ADDING THE ELEMENTS

The Mk.I was settled into the groundwork and blended in by adding a touch of pigment where required.

The blown off steering wheel and other accessories were also blended in at the same time.

The barbed wire strands were fashioned from copper wire and

heated through a candle before being painted a rust shade. Being a WWI diorama, barbed wire was always going to be a prerequisite! In my opinion scratching up barbed wire is a more believable option than using the photo-etch version available, with the etched wires and barbs sometimes appearing to be quite flat.

Diluted dark brown acrylics and a touch of Humbrol's Clear was used on the groundwork to add some more tonal variation.

ADDING FIGURES AND FINAL STEPS (CUE JAMIE D...)

As mentioned before the figures used in the diorama were by Russian company MasterClub, consisting of a kneeling squad leader with a Mauser pistol, a two-man Maxim MG08/15 crew and a solitary MG ammo box carrier.

The quality of the mouldings varied somewhat, with the two-man MG crew possessing much finer detailing than the others. The figures display a variety of the uniforms used by Imperial forces, with a mixture of different pattern tunics, puttees, boots and other equipment. This appears to be a very common occurrence right up until the end of hostilities in 1918.

Hornet's WWI German heads were used to replace the kit's renditions for three of the figures, with the kneeling NCO's head retained given that he's wearing a balaclava. For this figure an aftermarket head would have been more trouble than it was worth.

The helmets on the Hornet heads were enhanced with the addition of a lead rivet near the rim for the internal strap, as this was a prominent feature of the M16/17 helmet. A hole was also drilled in each of the large helmet cooling lugs, as Hornet had these moulded solid.

Other than the heads, the only modifications made to the figures were at the sleeve openings, with the sleeves hollowed out where possible.

After assembly, the figures were all primed with Tamiya Surface Primer applied through the airbrush. Mixes of various Tamiya acrylic colours (greys & greens) were used as base colours for the uniforms, for visual appeal and in keeping with the variety in colours and shades of the real uniforms that the Germans used during WWI. All Tamiya colours are thinned with Tamiya lacquer thinners, a light coat of Tamiya clear is then applied

as this helps with the next step with the artist oil application.

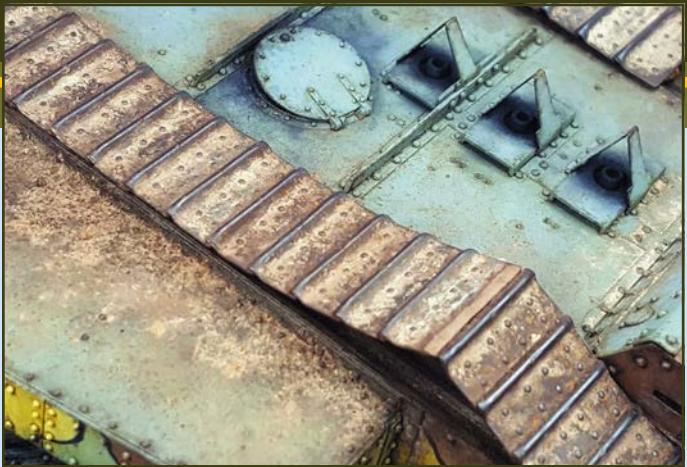
The shading and highlighting on the uniforms is with artist oils. Various mixes are made for different shades of the field grey and generally for the shadows, deep shadows, highlights and high highlights, all these are applied diluted with white spirit. The equipment, belts, pouches and so on were painted with Jo Sonja and Vallejo acrylics. The flesh was also applied using Vallejo acrylics, with various mixes for the base colour and shading and highlighting tones, these being very heavily diluted and with Jo Sonja retarder added. A slow build up with very thinly applied layers helps with the blending of the tones to try and achieve a natural look but also assists in trying to ensure there is contrast and variation.

A final flat coat of Testors Dulcote was applied through the airbrush to reduce the overall sheen. Final weathering of the uniforms was applied with various pigments and also appropriate acrylic earth coloured tones.

The figures were then fixed in place, with further weathering applied to help blend them in to the groundwork. ►



Barbed wire detail.



The top track run was kinked to replicate damage.



Guns were removed from some of the sponsons.



Accumulated grime underneath the upper track run.

One of the steering wheels lying by the side of the vehicle. The German figures lend scale and context to the scene.



“Takom’s Mk.I is certainly deserving of placing in a scenic setting to make it come to life...”

◀ CONCLUSION

As dioramas are usually out of my comfort zone it was good to challenge myself to actually finish a scene, albeit with some assistance!

Takom’s Mk.I is certainly deserving of placing in a scenic setting to make it come to life. Having known very little about these early beasts previously and after researching the lives and hardships of the crews who manned the vehicles I can now appreciate what a difficult and dangerous life the tank crews must have experienced 100 years ago. ■

Modelspec

Takom Mk.I Female (Kit No.03.02.2033)

Accessories Used:

MR Modellbau Replacement cab set for Mk.I Female (MR 35519)
MasterClub WWI German figures: MCF35180, MCF35103R, MCF35105R
Hornet heads HGH 09 (to suit WWI)

Tools and Materials:

Tamiya Lacquer thinners
Tamiya Extra Thin liquid Cement
Tamiya Liquid Surface Primer
Super Glue
Vallejo Plastic Putty
Tamiya Superfine Airbrush, Delta generic Airbrush
Fine copper wire

Paints and Finishing Products:

- Tamiya -XF-67 Nato Green, XF-66 Light Grey, XF-80 Royal Light Grey, Various greys for figures
- GSI Creos (Gunze) - H406 Chocolate Brown
- Vallejo - 71017 Russian Green, 71033 Yellow Ochre, 71080 Rust
- MIG Abteilung Oils - Olive Green
- Windsor & Newton Oils - Raw Umber, Lamp Black, Yellow Ochre, White, Burnt Sienna
- MIG Pigments - Europe Dust, Light European Earth, Dry Mud, Dark Mud
- Mig AMMO Africa Korps Wash (A.MIG-1001)
- AK Enamel Wash - Light Rust
- AK Pigment Fixer Enamel Fluid
- AK Ultra Matte Varnish (AK 183)
- AK Acrylic Thinner (AK712)
- Tamiya X-22 Clear

References Used:

Osprey's British Mark I Tank 1916, "Flers & Gueudecourt" (Somme) by Trevor Pidgeon, "Sturmtruppen" Tankograd (No. 1002), Osprey's German Army in WWI 1915-17 (2)

- ✓ A very detailed, not-overly complex kit. Workable tracks are a nice addition.
- ✗ Inaccuracies regarding driver's cab and a few other small details.

Available from

Pocketbond - www.pocketbond.co.uk

Rating





udecourt
omme, 1916

The completed scene. This was an
educational and enjoyable project.



The IS-3 heavy tank was a continuation of the excellent series of IS tanks put into service by the Soviet Army in World War Two. This tank looked quite different than its predecessors.

The prototype appeared under a simple code name "Object 703" in October of 1944. The turret was given a new, almost futuristic at that time, well-rounded look. The glacis plate was more heavily sloped for better ballistics protection. The main armament was the powerful 122mm D25-T gun as previously used in the IS-2.

The first tanks were delivered to the Red Army in early May 1945 just days after the war in Europe has finished. The first public appearance of the new tank took place during the Berlin victory parade on 7 May. The IS-3

made a great impression on all Allied military officials. They have just finished dealing (not without some hard moments) with Panthers and King Tigers and here appeared to them a new potential enemy. As usual... stronger than anything they had in their armament. It must not have been a pleasant thought.

The new tank arrived too late to take action in the war in Europe but it is believed that at least one regiment of the new IS-3 was deployed in the Russian Far East during August of 1945 to be a part of the soviet force attacking Japan in Manchuria.

I chose the IS-3 heavy tank as I was struck by the very original look of this 1945 tank. The choice in 1:35 scale kits is quite narrow for a 1945-1946 version of the vehicle as the only

offering is Tamiya Kit No. 35211. The other IS-3 kit on the market comes from Trumpeter however it represents the later IS-3M (introduced in 1952).

The Tamiya kit is a classic of the brand, a real box shaker. You just shake the box and the kit falls together by itself! Well, this might be a bit of an exaggeration but nevertheless building this kit is very straightforward.

I decided to detail it up and to do this some after market items were acquired. The first and most important item was the Voyager PE35198 photo etched set. Beside that a metal barrel from RB Model (35B32), workable tracks from Trumpeter (TK-12) and a metal antenna base from Armscale (S35-007) found their way to the workbench.

STALIN'S GREEN DEVIL

Pawel Rzymski builds and upgrades Tamiya's 1:35 scale IS-3, and also provides a step-by-step guide to painting and weathering the model.



CONSTRUCTION

Construction was divided into three main sub-builds - the lower hull with running gear, the upper hull and the turret.

From those three the first one, the lower hull, was very straightforward and completely out of the box. Once finished the Trumpeter workable tracks were used to replace the Tamiya rubber bands. I must admit that I hesitated a bit between going for the Friul or Trumpeter tracks. Trying to cut the budget a bit I made the choice on Trumpeter tracks which are quite cheap (around 11 EUR). It appeared to be an excellent choice.

The tracks turned out to be Modelkasten style. They were very easy to assemble although time consuming. The track links must

be first taken off the sprue so there is some clean up to do but nothing to be worried about too much. On the other hand there is absolutely no injection "pastilles" on the links, which is a really great thing.

It is also better to check all the pin holes with a small 0.4mm bit as some wholes appeared to be not completely open.

First I made a small run with the supplied jig and tested it on the kit sprocket. It went on quite well. Later on I used a paper file to send down the sprocket teeth very slightly so the track would sit on even better. After making two runs of 80 links each I installed them on the running gear to test the set up. The tracks formed a lovely looking, natural sag so typical to the KV tanks (the IS tanks were built on KV chassis).

The hull superstructure was a totally different story as this is where the most of the Voyager parts went to. On the rear plate and the upper hull, all the moulded-on loops were replaced with very nice photo-etched parts.

Amongst other upgrades were the gun's travel lock (on the rear plate), front and rear fenders, the shackles holder (on the left front fender), periscope covers and wiring for the light and siren.

On each side of the hull, three storage lockers have been added. These parts are not supplied in the Tamiya kit as it represents a vehicle from the first batch. This is a feature introduced in late 1945 or early 1946.

On the engine deck fuel lines have been reproduced using reference pictures and 0.3mm ▶



A small run was assembled to test the track on the kit sprocket.



The Trumpeter TK-12 KV-IS series workable tracks are similar to Modelkasten, composed of separate links and pins to join them.



The links may be joined on a plastic jig supplied in the set.



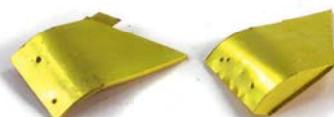
The track runs completed.



The Trumpeter tracks formed a very good looking sag typical of all KV and IS tanks.



Modified shackle holder with shackles made of PE and plastic rods.



Fuel tanks with updated fittings, handles, weld lines and resin plug-holes.



Rear plate with photo-etched loops and upgraded gun travel lock.

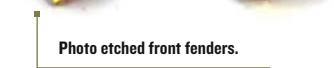
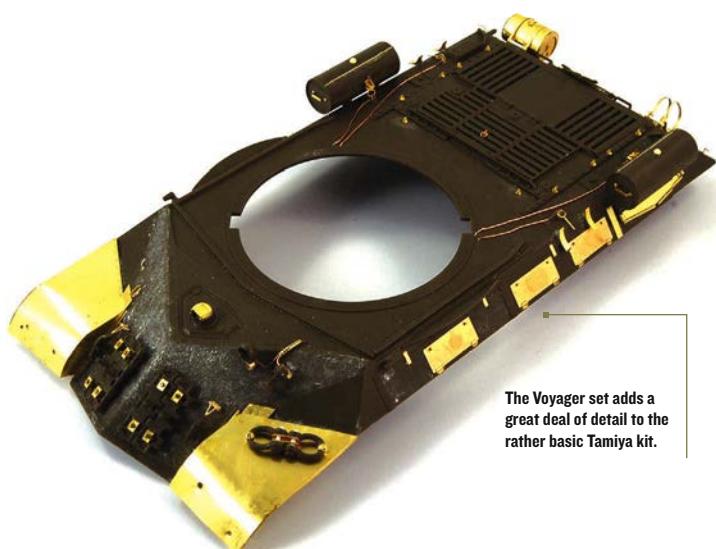


Photo etched front fenders.



The Voyager set adds a great deal of detail to the rather basic Tamiya kit.

◀ copper wire. It was not an easy task but the final result was worth the additional work. To finish the detailing of the upper hull one barrel type smoke generator and two pairs of fittings (steel bands) were on the rear of the tank.

The turret was the final step of the building process. At first I was going to keep the Tamiya turret rails but when I started to clean them up with a paper file few of them broke. I had no choice but to replace them all. The replacements were done using 0.5mm copper wire and the Griffon's handle folding tool (GTO01). All in all it was a good thing to do. Some of the new rails could have been slightly bent to show service usage. Beside parts from the Voyager set the ArmorScale metal antenna base was used. It's quite a small part but adds a lot to the turret look. The last but not least was DShK machine gun and its mounting ring. The Voyager manual is not the best I've seen (during all the build I was taking a look on the Aber's manual and reference pictures from available on-line walk-rounds of the IS-3) but finally all parts have found their place on the nicely moulded heavy machine gun. Finally the model was built!

PAINTING

After having rested in the box for a few months, the IS-3 finally made it to the painting workshop.

My usual procedure before painting is to give the model a soapy bath. The reason is simple. There is always some grease and dust even if you don't see it at first. If not cleaned it is quite certain it will eventually get visible after the first layer of paint is applied. So strong advice: always clean up your model.

Having added a lot of photo-etched parts I wanted to give the model a good primer layer so the paint I was going to spray on would adhere well to the surface. For such a purpose I decided to use the Gunze's Mr Surfacer. In its finest version (1200) it is the ultimate primer capable of covering all materials, brass parts included. After mixing Mr Surfacer with Mr Levelling thinner (Gunze's thinner with retarder) in about 1:1 ratio I sprayed few thin coats with my airbrush.

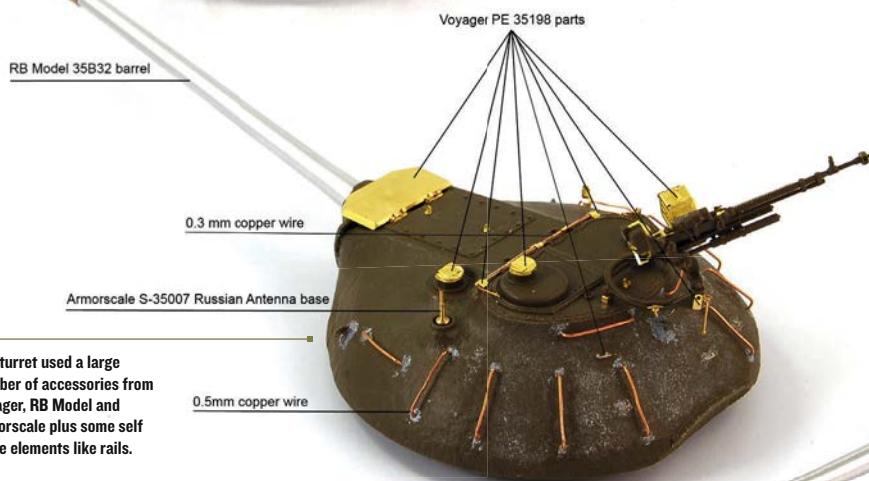
The next day when the model dried completely I started the real painting. I decided to try a new for me technique of Colour Modulation. For this purpose I acquired the AK Interactive 4BO ▶



DShK heavy machine gun detailed with Voyager parts.



The plastic rails were replaced by ones made of copper wire with the help of Griffon's handle tool.



The completed turret viewed from the front.



◀ Colour Modulation set (AK028). Nowadays few companies offer such sets but the one from AK seems to be the most complete.

The set is composed of six different green shade paints plus a primer and a satin varnish. On the back of the box there is small a "step by step" guide that helps to see how each paint should be used and what the final effect should be.

Painting started with the application of 4BO Shadow. This paint is very dark and quite thick. It needs to be diluted a bit. Areas where this paint was applied were mainly the rear deck and angles between front mudguards and upper hull.

The next colour to apply was the 4BO Dark Base. This colour was applied everywhere but the upper surface of the turret and gun (parts most exposed to the light).

In the following steps other paints were airbrushed over previous. 4BO Base, Light Base and Highlight were gently airbrushed keeping the previous paints still visible. The whole point of this technique is to create a fluid passage from the darkest to the lightest colour. It's not an easy task as it's not easy to not to simply over paint the previous layer.

The last shade, 4BO Shine, was applied with a fine brush on some raised details like screw heads, bolts, periscope covers and turret hand rails. It is extremely light and should be used sparingly and with care.

WEATHERING

To give more depth to the model, Mig Productions Deep Green Wash was applied. In fact this wash was applied more like a filter than a classic wash. In order to achieve a delicate effect the bottle was shaken and put aside for few moments so the pigment inside started falling down. At that moment with a help of large flat brush the greeny carrier liquid with only some small amount of pigment was brushed onto the model.

All paints in the previous steps were acrylics so the enamel based wash was applied directly. It certainly helps as each layer of varnish makes any model look darker. Furthermore oil paints were applied using the well known oil dots method to enshance even more the colour variation. Four colours were picked up: Burnt Sienna, Olive Green, Medium Green and Naples Yellow Light. Plenty of small dots were applied and than almost completely wiped off with white spirit. What was left created the desired visual effect of faded paint.

Chips that are often present on vehicles due to the service conditions have been depicted

using the "mapping" technique. This technique consists of painting a bigger and lighter than the base paint chip than a darker and smaller one is paint inside it. For this purpose the 4BO shine came handy (for the light base) and AK 711 Chipping Colour paint for the inner darker colour.

Both paints were applied with a brand new 5/0 small brush.

Continuing the weathering it was the right time to apply pin washes. Two AK washes were used here: Light Rust (AK046) and Dark Brown (AK045). I started by applying the Dark Brown wash first then the Light Rust was applied over to give the wash more rusty tone. Somewhere between wash applications the spare tracks and exhausts were painted with Lifecolor's rusty paints.

Track Wash (AK 083) was applied give the rusty colour a darker shade and also to give more depth to the tracks on the front glacis.

For quite a long time I have put away pigments to the benefit of thick enamel liquids (like AK interactive mud, earth and sand effects) mixed with plaster in order to create mud. This time I decided to get back to the old good coloured powders. First the whole lower hull has been sprinkled with Europe Dust PO28 pigment and blended with the pigment fixer using the capillary action. After the first application, a second layer, this time of Dry Mud P232, was applied the same way. When it was almost dry I used a flat brush moistened with white spirit to remove some. Then a third pigment was applied. Darker than the two used before Dark Mud P033 was sprinkled over and fixed Mig Productions Thinner for Washes (another name for White Spirit). To finish off the pigment work a very light Gulf War P037 was applied on very top side of the hull to add more contrast. Finally the Oil and Grease Stain Mixture was used to recreate oil stains on parts of suspension.

Later, on the same pigments were applied on the road wheels, sprockets and return rollers.

With the lower part of the model quite dirty it was time to get back to the upper part of the IS-3. Dirty streaks were applied using Winter Streaking Grime and Light Rust Wash from the AK Interactive stable of weathering products. Winter Grime is by far my favourite product as it is very thick and quite dark. Even after a heavy scrubbing with white spirit there's always something left visible.

After the lower hull and wheels were heavily dusted, the upper part of the model was missing the



AK Interactive paints set for Russian WWII vehicles.



A short "How To" is offered on the back of the box.



Pre-shading with the (quite thick) 4BO Shadow paint.

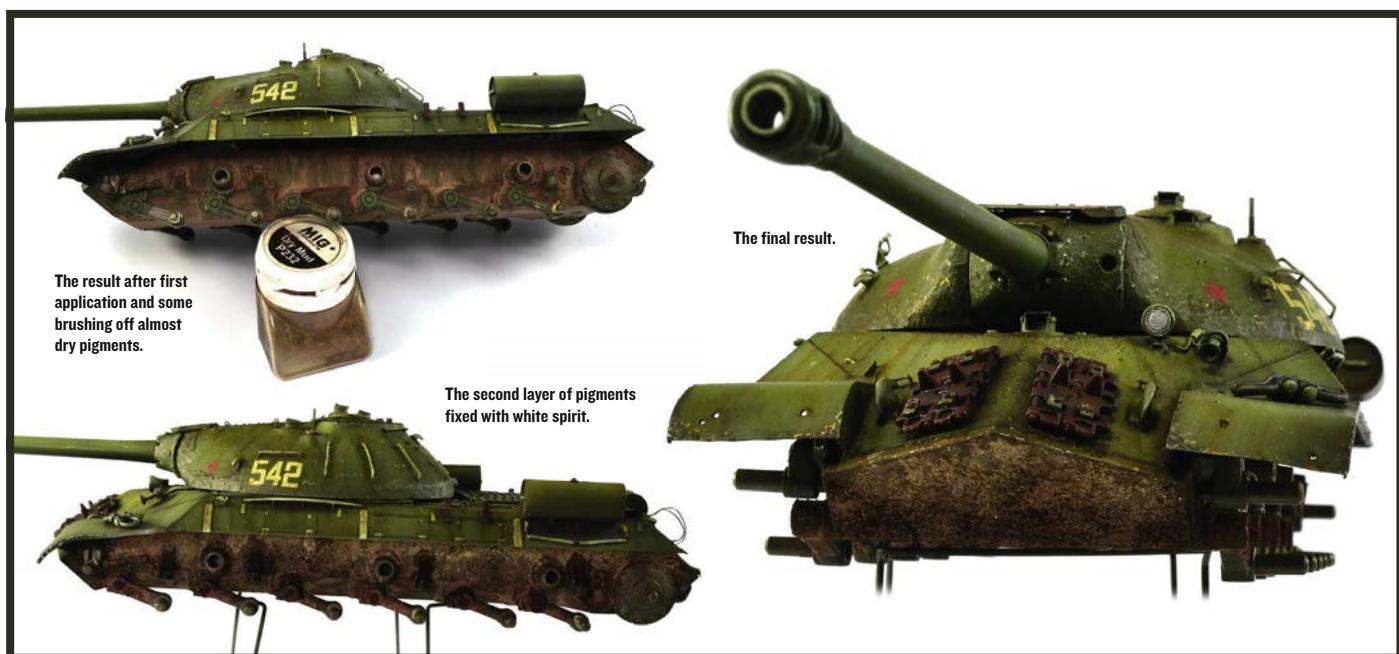


The second coat - 4BO Dark Base. Notice that the upper part of the turret and barrel have been left with the light grey primer.



The next layer - 4BO Base. The lower parts of the turret and hull are darker with the previous shade showing through.





layer of dust that would have gotten there. To remedy this situation a dusty wash made of Easy Mud Standard Light darkened with Vallejo 70826 German Camo Medium Brown acrylic paint and water was brushed on all over the upper surfaces. After evaporation of water a thin layer of dust covered the model.

At this time I started working on the tracks. First they were painted with a mix of Tamiya Flat Black and

Red Brown (the paint should be more black than red brown. Next AK080 Summer Kursk Earth thick paste was brushed on. During next two days again Europe Dry Mud and Europe Dust were sprinkled on the tracks and fixed with pigment fixer. The raised chevrons which are in constant contact with the ground were painted polished steel colour using a very handy Tamiya enamel marker. On the inside the tracks had only dry pigments

brushed on. The inner part was treated with a very soft pencil to recreate the effect of always rolling on steel wheels.

The last touch-ups consisted of the application of fuel stains on the rear deck and fuel tanks and some more dust effects. In fact the dusty wash turned out to be insufficient in some places. The final effect was achieved by applying dusty streaks using the AK 080 Kursk Earth. ■

Mini Modelspec

Tamiya 1:35 IS-3

Kit No. 35211

A classic Tamiya kit; fast and easy build.

Some areas lacking in detail.

Available from

Tamiya kits are distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net

Rating



Tracks were first painted with a mix of Tamiya Flat Black and Red Brown.



AK Interactive's Kursk Earth thick liquid was applied after the paint dried.



Dry pigments were brushed on and fix with pigment fixer.



The parts of tracks that are in constant touch with the ground were painted aluminium colour with a Tamiya enamel marker.



On the inside the Europe Dust pigment was simply brushed on.



The last step was another layer of dry pigment just brushed on (Dark Mud). A very soft artist's pencil was also used to show the worn metal colour where the road wheels roll all the time.



Fuel stains on the engine deck and fuel tanks were made by applying a special purpose fluid.



At the end, muddy colour streaks were created using the AK's Kursk Earth liquid to dust up the model.



“You just shake the box and the kit falls together by itself! Well, this might be a bit of an exaggeration but nevertheless building this kit is very straightforward...”



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Blades to fit the #2 & #5 handle

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References - IS-3 Close-Up



IS-3 CLOSE-UP

Soviet "Shchuka" Zack Sex brings us a walk around on the Josef Stalin 3, revealing a heavy tank with more than a few fault lines.

One only has to glance at the Josef Stalin 3 to feel its menace. With its low slung sleek design, its sharp front and 122mm gun, it is little wonder the crews called it "Shchuka" or Pike.

As Adam Wilder and myself examined a rather battered example outside Moscow, we discussed the impression the IS-3 must have made on the Hungarian insurgents in Budapest in 1956, and the fact that they managed to destroy at least three with Molotov cocktails testament to their bravery.

Coming as it did at the end of World War Two, the Pike was a part of the Soviet heavy tank evolution from KV series to the T10.

While on the outside the IS3

was the personification of Red Army tank power, it was on the inside that things were not at all that right.

The Pike's transmission was a variant of an old KV unit not suitable for such a large tank, while its V-2-1-s diesel V-12 was far too weak for a 47 ton tank.

The Israelis experimented with installing new engines in captured Egyptians examples but to no avail.

In terms of main armament, the Pike's main gun was slow to load and there was only space for 28 rounds on board.

Nevertheless, none of this could be known to American and British army commanders as they watched in awe as IS3 of the 71st Guards Heavy Tank Division paraded through Berlin in September 1945

celebrating the Allied victory over Hitler's Reich.

The Western Allies were to invest vast sums building the US M103 and British Conqueror in response to this Cold War threat. What would defence analysts have thought if they knew that the weld seams on the IS3 were cracking under the strain of its heavy weight?

Production of these troublesome beasts was completed in 1946 with more than 2300 examples built. A modernisation and strengthening programme in 1948 brought the IS-3 up to IS-3M standard.

As mentioned already the only action the Stalin three was to see in Europe was during the failed Hungarian uprising. It was in the Middle East that the Pike would see its real baptism of fire

when used against Israeli M48s in the Sinai during the Six Day War. Outflanked, destroyed or captured, the IDF dug their new Pikes in along the Bar Lev defence line facing their old owners only to lose them back to Egypt temporarily during the 1973 war.

Some Soviet Pikes were to end their days dug in on the Kurile islands and in particular along the Chinese frontier after confrontation between Mao's PLA and Soviet border guard units as static pill boxes keeping a vigilant eye over the USSR's neighbours to the east.

These Cold War combatant may still be found with their faded green livery covered in grass and moss, rusting into the soil as their empty barrels point to a very different China today. ■



▲ The right side pressed metal front mudguard.



▲ The rectangular lugs are designed to mount spare track links.



▲ The driver's hatch on the open position. Watch your head on the turret!



▲ A good view of the hinge for the left front mudguard.



▲ An overall rear three quarter view.



References - IS-3 Close-Up



▲ Upper and lower rear hull plates.



▲ The side skirts are just sheet metal and are easily damaged.



▲ One of the integrated hull stowage boxes.



▲ One of the big drive sprockets.



▲ The all-steel road wheels and return rollers.



▲ The rough cast texture of the turret is obvious even on this rain soaked example.



▲ The cast metal muzzle brake.



▲ Vertical and horizontal hand holds adorn the turret sides.



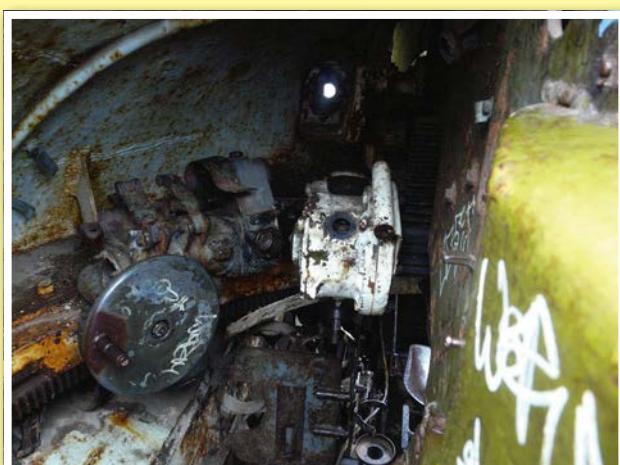
▲ Heavy grates on the engine deck.



▲ The large and graffitied gun breech.



▲ Lower rear turret and hull interior including a discarded hatch.



▲ Looking forward in the turret to the gunner's position.



▲ The driver's seat pan may be seen at the front.



References - IS-3 Close-Up



▲ Outside view of the upper gun mantlet.



▲ The full turret opening.



▲ Zack Sex (left) and Adam Wilder.



▲ A restored IS-3. ►



▲ Exhaust detail.



▲ Polish-marked IS-3.



▲ The cast texture is very striking.



▲ Nice detail of track link edges and track pins.



▲ Spare track links in place.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

Tamiya 1:48 Mtl.SPW.Sd.Kfz. 251/1 Ausf. D • Kit No. 32564



Back in 2009,
The Editor built
Tamiya's then-new
1:48 scale late-
version Sd.Kfz. 251
Ausf. D half-track.

JUST SHAKE THE BOX...

You might have to do a little more than just shake the box, but Tamiya's 1:48 scale Sd.Kfz. 251 Ausf. D certainly presents no obstacles or complicated assemblies for the modeller. The flip side of this simple construction sequence is that doors and hatches are fixed in the closed positions, while underside detail is very basic.

However, if you are the sort of modeller who likes to see fast results, you are going to love this kit.

The lower hull is assembled in minutes due to the fixed suspension arms and simple slab of a rear door. The road wheels and drive sprockets are similarly straightforward. No poly caps here – just cement the wheels straight to the suspensions arms, while the sprockets are a tight press fit. This is handy, as it allows for minor adjustment when fitting the link and length tracks.

Those tracks are supplied in just 13 sections each – seven sections of two links and the rest in longer lengths. I found that I needed to bend

the front or back link on Parts A20 to achieve a constant contour with Parts 22 as they started their tight journey around the drive sprockets and rear road wheels, but this could hardly be considered a challenging issue. After the track parts had been removed from the sprues, assembly of each run took less than 15 minutes.

We now turn our attention inside the vehicle. The bench seats and driver's controls were glued to the floor, while the backrests and other details were attached to the sidewalls. It is easiest to paint the interior at this stage, as the upper hull will interfere with detail painting. First, the entire interior was painted with my custom German Dark Yellow mix. This comprises 40% XF-59 Desert Yellow, 40% Tamiya XF-60 Dark Yellow and 20% XF-2 Flat White. An extra 15% of white was added to the mix for a fading colour, which was sprayed in fine streaks, spots and mottles at random.

The outlines of the bench seats and backrests were painted with a fine brush in a dark mix of Tamiya XF-1 Flat Black and XF-64 Red Brown

of equal proportions. The same colour was then loaded into my Aztek A470 airbrush and the spaces between the brush-painted outline was coloured in.

The instrument panel and radio face are supplied as decals. These may look a little cartoonish at first glance, but the configuration seems to be accurate and the extra visibility will be helpful when they are hidden deep in the recesses of the driver's compartment. I quite like them.

The interior parts were now treated first to a brush-coat of Mig Productions' Tan Filter for Tritonal Finish, followed by a selected pin wash of dark thinned oil paint. This oil wash was applied carefully to panel lines and other structural features with the point of a fine brush. When dry, the final weathering touch for the interior was some subtle "chipping" with a brown artist's pencil.

The main assemblies were now brought together. There is some margin for error when fitting the side stowage bins (Parts B9 and B10),



The link and length tracks are a joy to assemble.



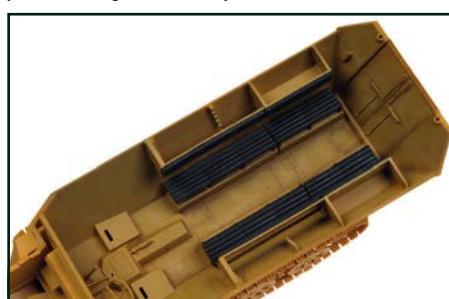
The interior floor, benches, front seats and levers may be assembled prior to installing them in the body.



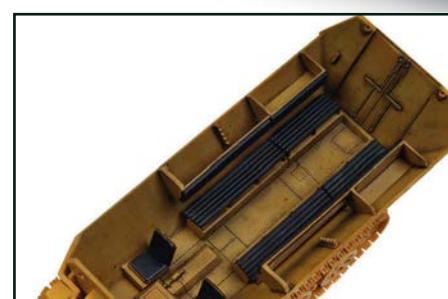
The radio installed on the underside of the upper body.



The base paint colour plus some airbrushed streaking has been applied to the interior before the upper body is glued in place.



Mig Productions' Tan Filter for Tritonal Finish has been brushed over all the interior surfaces. The effect is subtle.



A dark oil wash has a more noticeable impact. This has been applied selectively with the tip of a fine brush.



The instruments are provided as a decal. "Chipping" has been added to the interior walls and floor with a brown artist's pencil.



Tamiya also supplies a decal for the radio.



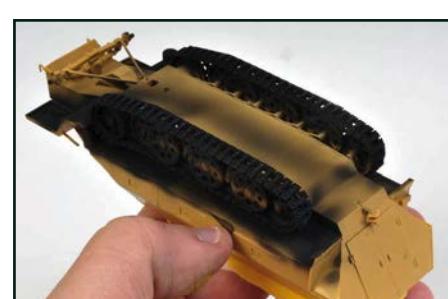
The interior takes shape.



Test fitting revealed no likely gaps or problems.



The completed model was prepared for paint by masking off the interior with masking tape and tissue paper.



First the tracks were painted Tamiya XF-1 Flat Black.

so take your time and test fit before committing to cement.

I managed to hack an untidy chunk out of the side of one of the delicate width indicators when removing the residual sprue attachment. Shortly afterwards, I lost the other pole to the ever ravenous carpet monster. I actually bought an AFV Club kit partly to raid the poles from the box, but in the end I left the sprues of the Ausf. C intact and made my own replacements from an industrial light filament cut to size and bent to shape. Bill Wiseman (currently of WWII Productions) gave me a container of these filaments around 15 years ago, and I have found dozens of interesting ways to use them.

DRESSING FOR NORMANDY

The camouflage colours were all mixed from Tamiya acrylics and applied with the airbrush. The basic colours received fading coats, with streaks and mottles in paler shades of the original colours. This irregular finish looks

a little over the top at this stage but later weathering will tone down the effect. For the moment, we should take heed of the words of that great philosopher George Michael - you gotta have faith!

As it turned out, I did not really like the look of the finish with the Red Brown, so I overpainted most of this colour leaving just a hint remaining. The camouflaged model was brushed with two thin overall coats of Tan Filter, which started the blending process.

The model was prepared for decals with two fine coats of Tamiya TS-13 Clear straight from the spray can. I have used this product a couple of times recently, and I am impressed with its hard, glossy finish and fast drying time. Having a lacquer base, you can use either oil or acrylic washes over it too. You do have to watch out for runs though, making it important to spray only thin coats on your model.

A pin wash was mixed from Winsor and Newton Lamp Black and Raw Umber oil paints.

This was applied to structural details on the glossy surface, including the wheels, locker panels, padlocks and more.

Decals were sourced from a 1996 vintage after market decal sheet from Tamiya, "German Decal Sheet Set D". These are ostensibly 1:35 scale, but the white outlined red digits looked about the right size for my 1:48 scale Hanomag.

Tiny chips were added to the exterior paintwork. Dark brown was painted onto the Panzer Yellow sections, while Buff was used on the Dark Green. Subtlety is the key here - less is definitely better. The paint chipping was applied with the extreme tip of a fine brush.

With the model nearly complete I sprayed several thin coats of Gunze Flat Clear. This instantly transformed the finish. Chipping was then added to the edges of the vehicle, first with a brown artist's pencil and then, with more restraint, using a 2B pencil. The same pencil was rubbed over the black-painted MG 42 machine guns to suggest a metallic finish. ■

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

Tamiya 1:48 Mtl.SPW.Sd.Kfz. 251/1 Ausf. D • Kit No. 32564



Camouflage colours were sourced from Tamiya's range of acrylic paints.



The base colour was the German Dark Yellow mix. Around 15% Flat White was added to the Dark Yellow mix as a fading shade applied in streaks, spots and mottles.



Tamiya XF-67 was mixed with the Dark Yellow mix in equal proportions to obtain the German Dark Green colour. This was built up slowly and irregularly using a Testor Aztek airbrush.



The profile in "Panzers in the Bocage" indicated restrained use of Red Brown in addition to the Dark Green camouflage. This was a 50/50 mix of Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown and the Dark Yellow mix.



Tamiya TS-13 Clear was used for the gloss coat prior to the application of decals.



The "111" digits were sourced from Tamiya German Decal Sheet D, Item No. 66613.

Technically, these are 1:35 scale but they look fine on this model.



Industrial light filaments were adapted for use as width indicator poles.



Light coloured "chipping" was applied to the Dark Green areas of the paintwork, with dark chips on the Dark Yellow.



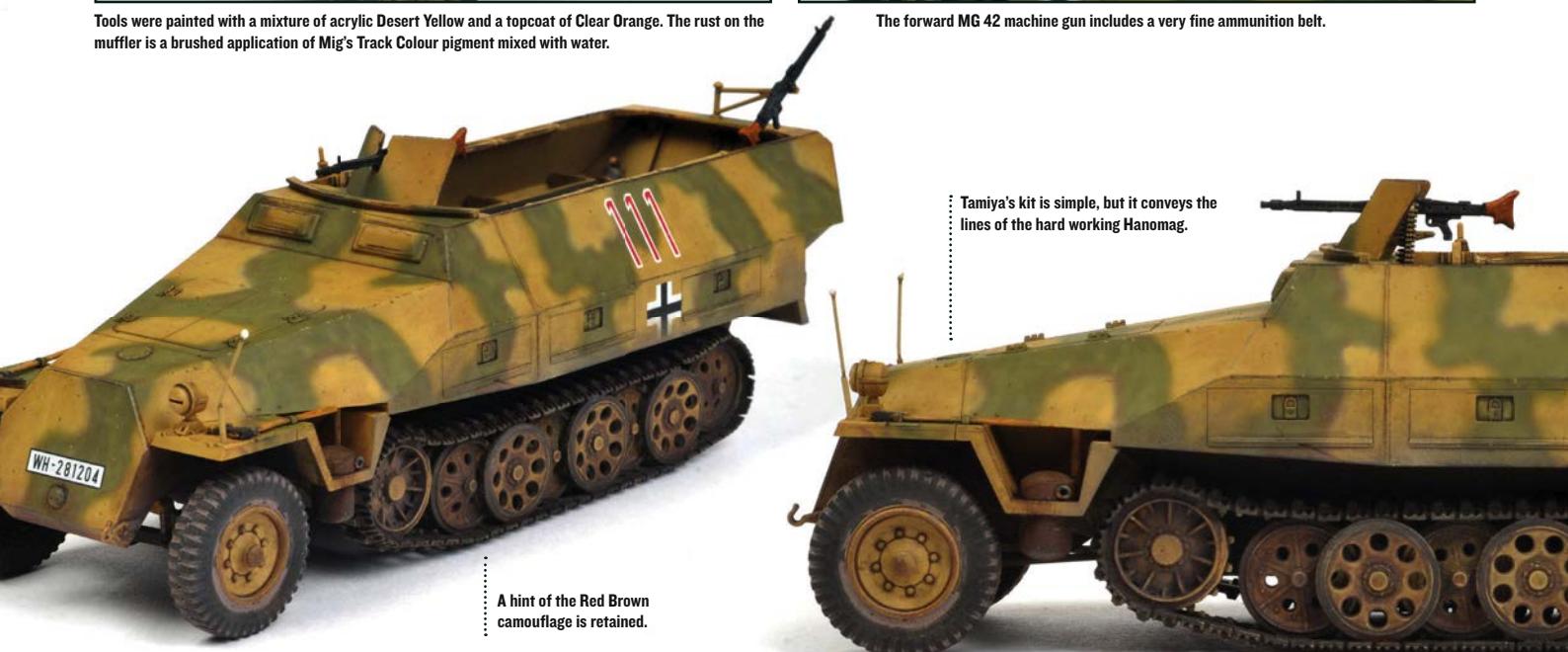
Gunze Flat Clear was sprayed over the entire model for an appropriately lustreless finish.



Tools were painted with a mixture of acrylic Desert Yellow and a topcoat of Clear Orange. The rust on the muffler is a brushed application of Mig's Track Colour pigment mixed with water.



The forward MG 42 machine gun includes a very fine ammunition belt.



A hint of the Red Brown camouflage is retained.

Tamiya's kit is simple, but it conveys the lines of the hard working Hanomag.



Kit decals were used for the balkenkreuze and the number plates.

Mini Modelspec

Tamiya 1:48 Mtl.SPW.Sd.Kfz. 251/1 Ausf. D
Kit No. 32564

Excellent surface detail and texture; precise link and length tracks; fast build; perfect fit; includes two figures and stacks of stowage and ordnance; plenty of potential for a wide variety of finishes.

Fixed hatches and visors; flat moulded-on stowage padlocks.

Available from

All good model shops Worldwide.
Thanks to Tamiya for the sample www.tamiya.com
Tamiya is distributed in the UK by The Hobby Company Limited www.hobbyco.net

Rating

PANZER



It would be fair to consider Tamiya's 1:35 scale Pz.Kpfw. IV Ausf. H 'early version', first issued in 1994, as an old kit; however to those of us who remember the earlier model of the same tank that dated from the 1970s this is still the 'new' Tamiya Pz.Kpfw.IV!

It was one of the first of the new generation of Tamiya models that were uncompromised by motorisation and tooled to a much higher standard of detail and accuracy than before. Over the years, Tamiya has not only released new subjects, but have also steadily replaced their older kits with newer ones, starting I think with the King Tiger and most recently with the Panzer IV/70.

I bought this kit when it was first released and it is hard to believe that it has resided in the 'Loft of Shame' for 22 years! During

that time I had also acquired a set of Modelkasten 'Panzer III/ IV 40cm Middle Type' individual track links and an Aber 75mm L/48 KwK 40 metal gun barrel. I wanted to build this kit, but the problem for me with the choice of the Ausf.H is the schürzen; the grenade screens that were factory fitted on all Ausf.H and J, as well as late Ausf.G. I think that they just look clumsy and also conceal the attractive lines of the tank. The easiest solution would be to build the kit as a vehicle produced just before the schürzen were standardised, making it a middle production Ausf.G. I had very little in the way of detailed pictorial references, but an unexpectedly useful source was the Osprey New Vanguard 39: Pz.Kpfw.IV Ausf. G, H, and J, by Tom Jentz and Hilary Doyle; this includes a helpful chronology of the main external

changes made to these marks through their production runs that I would need to incorporate.

Browsing the Hannant's web site I spotted Armor PhotoGallery #22, Pz.Kpfw.IV Aus.G from Model Centrum, and it was on special offer so I ordered it. This A4 paperback proved invaluable; consisting of a 43-page photo-walkaround of the Pz.Kpfw.IV G in the Panzermuseum Münster, a 4-view 1:35 scale drawing of the same vehicle (also in 1:48), and 22 pages of wartime photographs accompanied by captions and historical text.

Before going any further I should of course say that the best option for building a Pz.Kpfw.IV G would be to use the excellent Dragon 'Smart Kit'. In fact they make two, an initial version they call the Ausf. F2(G) and a mid-production one similar to that which I attempted here. Unfortunately these kits are

only intermittently available, so get one when you can.

The other option is the venerable Italeri kit, a good kit in its day and much cheaper than the Dragon ones, but you do get what you pay for. However, what I had was the Tamiya model, so I started by considering how to change the single hatch commander's cupola into a split hatch, and soon discovered that the single-hatch cupola is in fact completely different, being larger and more heavily armoured. I could have taken the cupola from the Tamiya Pz.Kpfw.III Ausf.L that I also had half-finished as they are the same, but I am reluctant to spoil one good kit for the sake of another (in fact robbing the Panzer III would have solved a few problems, as the two vehicles shared a number of components) so I looked around for an aftermarket alternative. Mig

BACHDATE

Jim Turner backdates Tamiya's 1:35 scale Panzer IV Ausf. H to an Ausf. G



Aftermarket parts used for the project.

Productions made a resin casting of the required part, but it was no longer available except as part of a 'PzIV F2 Conversion Resin Set' still listed by Historex (historexagents.com), so it was duly ordered. This proved to be a useful purchase as I also used some other parts from it. The Mig set consists of a complete resin turret, less the stowage bin, with an aluminium barrel by Jordi Rubio, a pair of early style driver's and machine-gunner's hatches and a set of early armoured final drive casings. It came with very detailed painting and weathering instructions but irritatingly no assembly instructions at all. I decided against using the Mig turret as it was of the earliest Ausf. F2 type which would have needed even more changes to the hull. It was also a heavy solid casting with a turret ring much smaller than the aperture in the Tamiya hull.

TURRET

The Tamiya turret required a number of modifications. The Ausf.H and J had a reinforced roof with armour thickness increased from 10mm overall to 16mm at the front and 22mm at the rear. The result is a noticeable step between the front and rear panels, both of which stand proud of the turret sides when fitted.

I cut the roof apart at the step with a hobby knife and filed a bevel on the outside edges of the underside until both parts fitted flush with the turret sides. The six slots in the roof panel for the schürzen brackets were filled with scraps of plastic card and sanded flush. The cylindrical projections on the roof are mounting sockets for a 5-ton jib that was fitted to the Ausf. J and so these were removed, as were the splash guard ring around the cupola and the

cupola mounting ring, leaving just the broad, shallow raised lip onto which the Mig cupola was fixed using cyanoacrylate. The real cupola was non-rotating and should be fixed with the doors split fore and aft and one vision port facing forward. The rain guard above the gun sight aperture on the turret front was also a late feature and so I removed it with a hobby knife. My next problem was that a couple of turret features that were deleted in the Ausf.H needed to be added: the signal port hatch in the roof and the two conical pistol port covers on the rear, flanking the stowage bin. Both of these features are common to the Pz.Kpfw.III Ausf.L, the Tamiya kit of which I had partly built, so I decided to use the Pz.Kpfw.III as a master to cast copies. I formed moulds by building up layers of Humbrol Maskol, a water-based latex solution, around

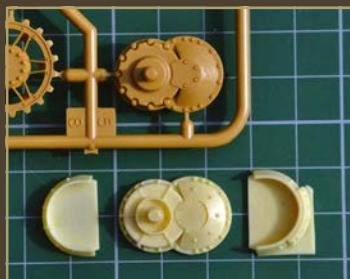
the relevant parts of the Pz.Kpfw. III turret, these need to be 2-3mm thick so as to hold their shape when removed. Poking around the part surface under the Maskol with a pin or toothpick before it cures dislodged any air bubbles. When completely cured (overnight) the Maskol moulds peel away readily and retain a good level of detail; being flexible they can even capture re-entrant detail.

Next I needed some casting medium to make the parts. I tried car body filler but found this to be too fragile for small parts that disintegrated when I tried to clean them up, so I decided to order some proper casting resin.

Many types are available through the Internet, but mostly in much too large quantities. The one I bought was a two-part polyurethane resin called 'Polycraft SG2000' which only cost £10 for ►



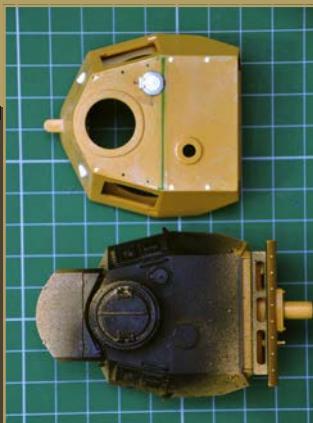
Humbrol Maskol moulds of the pistol ports and signal port taken from the Tamiya Pz.Kpfw.III Ausf.L turret.



The Tamiya Ausf.H final drive housing on the sprue and the earlier style Mig three part resin replacement.



Early attempts at casting using car body filler were not successful as the parts proved too fragile to clean up.



The polyurethane resin castings in place on the modified Pz.Kpfw.IV turret, alongside the Pz.Kpfw.III prototype. Also visible is the modified roof panel and cut down cupola mounting.



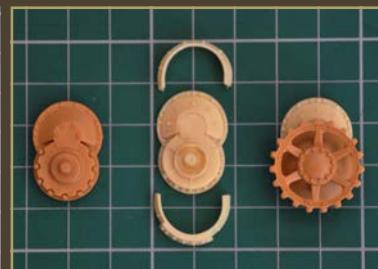
The completed turret, with copper wire grab handles and (incorrect) Aber 7.5cm L/48 metal barrel sits on the partly assembled hull, with the Mig resin early type hatches fitted.



Underside view showing the infilled sponsons. Locating ridges for the schürzen brackets were also sanded off.



Maskol moulds for the Bosch headlamp parts: back, front and base, along with a couple of casting attempts for each.



Tamiya and Mig final drive housings, showing that the differences are mostly concealed by the drive sprocket.

◀ 500g (2x250g) plus p&p from MB Fibreglass (mbfg.co.uk) and which is described as a paintable fast cast liquid casting resin suitable for models and patterns. The two parts should be mixed thoroughly but carefully so as not to introduce air bubbles, the mixed liquid resin then becomes increasingly viscous in minutes, so it should be poured as quickly as possible.

I mounted the moulds horizontally on the workbench using Blu-Tack and added a minimum amount of the mixed resin, such that the surface is just proud of the top of the mould; again I poked around with a pin, gently so as not to tear the rubber mould, to release any bubbles, and left them to cure. As it cures the clearish amber resin becomes opaque, the supplied instructions recommend a de-mould time of about 30 minutes.

To release the cured parts, I gently stretched the mould sideways all around and they came away cleanly. I found that the cured resin is still quite fragile at this stage, pulling thinner parts out directly risks snapping them. The manufacturer suggests that it takes about 72 hours to achieve full cure, by which time it is quite tough and similar to that seen with commercial resin accessories and models. Waiting longer to de-mould is advisable for delicate castings, I found that overnight is adequate.

With care it is possible to re-use the moulds two or three times. A word of caution though – it is perfectly permissible to use this technique for personal use, but distributing either the moulds or castings would certainly infringe

the original copyright!

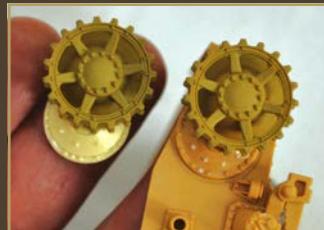
Having cast the signal port hatch and pistol port covers, I gently sanded the back surfaces flat by placing a sheet of 600 grade 'Wet & Dry' on the bench, wetted it and placed the part on it, then I gently moved the part with one finger using a circular motion and very gentle pressure. This action gives best results for an even removal of material. Check the part regularly as the resin disappears at a surprising rate.

The parts were fixed to the turret using cyanoacrylate. I have found that cyano seems to cure extremely quickly in contact with resin, so I pre-positioned the parts on the model and held them in place with a toothpick, then applied a small drop of thin cyanoacrylate adhesive (I used 'Bostik Glu&Fix Precision') adjacent to the part. Capillary action quickly drags the glue under the part and it grabs almost immediately. Any surface glue can be quickly removed by touching with the corner of a tissue. I found this to be the best method of fixing the resin parts cleanly and precisely.

The Aber gun barrel was assembled using cyanoacrylate and fitted as per instructions then primed with Warhammer 'Chaos Black' Primer from the aerosol can. I then had a 'Homer Simpson' moment, in my haste to fit the very nice Aber product I had wrongly assumed that the double-baffle muzzle brake indicated the fitting of the longer L/48 barrel; had I read the references properly I would have known that in fact this was not fitted until much later and mid-production vehicles like



The assembled Bosch headlamp in place, drilled and mounted on a post made from 0.8mm piano wire. The green filler repair on the bow plate resulted from dropping the hull on the concrete garage floor!



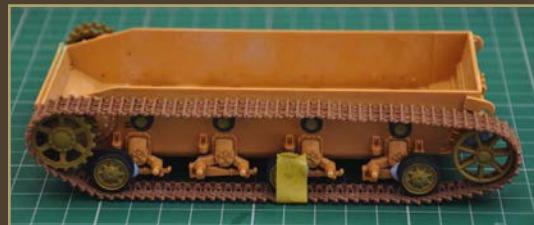
The Tamiya final drive in place with the extra cast resin bolts added compared to the Mig part.



Assembling the Modelkasten tracks. The pre-painted wheels were temporarily fixed using Blu-tack and a scrap piece of wood was used to align the clip-together non-articulated links, which were then fixed with Tamiya Extra Thin Cement. When the track lengths were still pliable they were applied to the wheels at a top and bottom run.



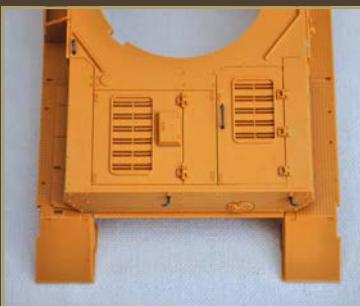
Tracks left in place until completely dry, and then removed for painting.



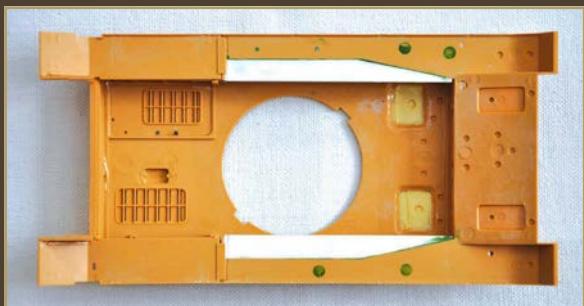
Again but without the superstructure in place. The hull was not joined until after the tracks had been assembled to make fitting the top run easier.



The completed and modified Tamiya turret (complete with the wrong barrel) alongside the Mig version.



Engine deck showing the handles and tow cable stowage brackets replaced with 0.6mm piano wire (mantuamodel.co.uk)



Underside of the superstructure showing the infilled sponsons.



The antenna mount in its mould with antenna and post wires pre-inserted.



The resin antenna mount cleaned up and the wires trimmed, alongside the Pz.Kpfw.III prototype part attached to the sprue.



The antenna fixed in place in the stowed position in the antenna trough. A hole was drilled in the hull for the mounting post. Brackets have been added to the trough using 10 thou plastic card. The bracket support positions differ from the kit instructions and match the photographs of the Panzermuseum vehicle.

mine had the shorter L/43 barrel combined with the double-baffle brake. Removing the barrel would have been impossible without major surgery, so not sure what to do about it, I pressed on.

The final touches to the turret were to replace the grab handles above the side hatches with copper bell wire, and add the antenna insulators to the stowage bin from 30 thou plastic card and scrap plastic, drilled with a pin vice and 0.75mm bit to represent the recessed bolts. The bottom insulator was made in three sections so as to achieve sharp corners.

HULL

Turning to the hull, the first thing that cried out for fixing was the open sponson undersides. I simply cut panels of 30 thou plastic card to fit flush with the underside of the track guards, slightly overlapping the lower hull sides, and hid the join with Squadron Green Putty. I replaced the engine deck handle with 0.6mm piano wire from Mantua (mantuamodel.co.uk) and used the same to add a small grab handle to the left side (from photos in the PhotoGallery book) and to replace the short moulded stubs on the rear plate with proper L-shaped towing cable stowage brackets.

The Ausf. H was fitted with a single Bosch headlamp on the left side, but the Ausf. G had one each side. Flushed with success at my earlier attempts at casting, I thought I would try casting the second one. The base is moulded on the track guard so the process was the same as before, the lamp body however was moulded in two halves, front and back. To form a backing to build the moulds

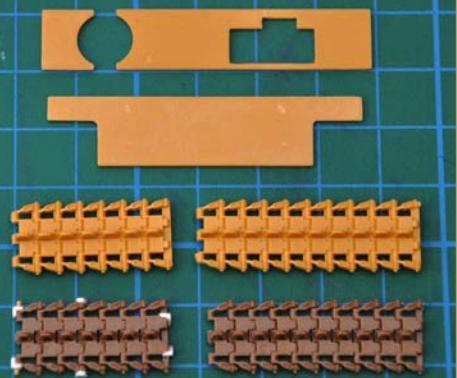
against, I fixed Tamiya Masking Tape to the back of the parts, still on the sprue, and then built up the moulds as before. Unfortunately when cured the Maskol mould stuck fast to the tape, so I had to release it by applying white spirit to the tape to dissolve the glue. On reflection it would have been better to cut the parts from the sprue and temporarily fix them to a flat surface. The resin castings were made and sanded as for the turret fittings and assembled with cyanoacrylate. The base and lamp body were then drilled and a mounting post was made from 0.8mm piano wire.

I took the OVM and pioneer tool layout from the PhotoGallery plans; they differ slightly from the kit. The axe and track pulling hook positions are swapped over to accommodate the extra headlamp, I had to shorten the axe handle by about 1mm inboard of the rear clip to get it to fit. The C-shaped towing shackles on the left front track guard were replaced by the earlier type S-shaped shackles, I considered casting these but in the end took them from a CyberHobby German tank accessory set. The track adjusting spanners are not provided with retaining straps so I made some from 10 thou plastic card.

Instead of the fixed antenna base of the Ausf. H, earlier vehicles had a pivoting antenna that could be rotated horizontally to lie in a protective wooden trough. Fortunately the trough was retained in the Ausf.H as it also housed a spare antenna and so was included in the Tamiya kit, although I did have to revise the mounting bracket positions to match the PhotoGallery pictures. For some reason, Tamiya does ►



The two-part polyurethane resin casting kit.



The modified applique armour plates; attachment bolts were sanded off, the aperture for the driver's visor was squared off and the cut-out for the driver's stereoscopic telescope added. Below are the kit spare track lengths compared to replacements made from Modelkasten links, the latter having the appropriate hollow guide horns of the earlier track. The seven links on the glacis have mounting brackets made from 30 thou plastic card and scrap plastic rod, copied from photographs in the PhotoGallery book.



The partly assembled model just prior to base coat painting and final assembly. Note the red and green paint on the tracks – indicating left and right.



The stowage bin insulators were added from kit scrap plastic (upper) and 30 thou card (lower). These were to prevent the antenna being grounded by contact with the metal bin as the turret rotated, and were presumably made of wood. Fixing bolts were recessed, so were simulated using a pin vice and 0.75mm bit.

◀ not provide the outer parts of the brackets and omit the rear bracket altogether, so I added these with 10 thou plastic card.

The pivoting antenna base looked to be a real headache. Once again the Pz.Kpfw.III provided a pattern to cast a new part, but it would have to be drilled to accept both the antenna itself and a mounting post. To do that with such a small part I thought would be near impossible; the solution was to cast the base with the wires in place. I made the mould using the same method as for the headlamps, then I carefully placed a section of 0.8mm piano wire for the post and some thin wire from the spares box for the antenna into the mould and added the resin; fortunately it worked first time! The base has no detail on the reverse, which was the open side of the mould, but I mounted it in the stowed position so this is not really visible. The fixed antenna base on the rear armoured radiator cover was deleted and the gun cleaning rod set repositioned centrally. The spade was moved to under the antenna trough and the original location slots filled. The spade itself was held in a D-shaped bracket rather than the simple strap as moulded, so I modified this with Squadron Green Putty. The large air intake pre-filter on the right track guard was omitted and the small triangular support bracket fitted instead.

From the Mig set I used the early style driver's and machine-gunner's hatches. I intended to use the Mig final drive housings but I couldn't get them to fit, so I used the Tamiya parts fitted with the Mig front armoured guards. I could find no pictures of an Ausf.G fitted with the rear guards, so I left them off. Most of the other differences are concealed by the drive sprockets; the only modifications necessary were to add some extra bolt heads. I made these by casting copies of the Tamiya parts and cutting off the bolt heads with a scalpel, then sticking them to the plastic original with cyanoacrylate.

TRACKS & RUNNING GEAR

The Modelkasten tracks K-3 'Panzer III/IV 40cm Middle Production' are from their original

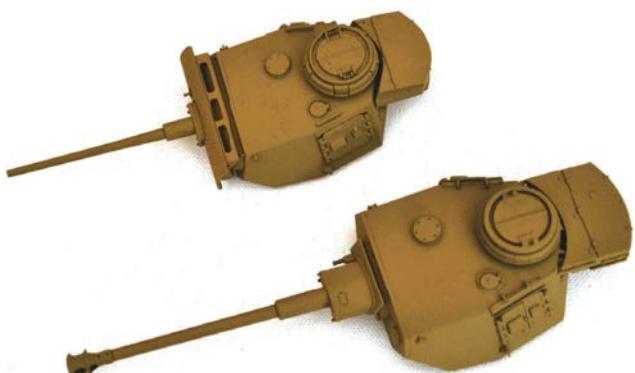
range, indicated by the K prefix, which are no longer in production and have been superseded by the SK range. They are not articulated and simply clip together rather like Dragon Magic Tracks. Each link has two very shallow ejector pin marks on the inner face, but I was definitely not about to fill and sand two hundred links!

The wheels were airbrushed with Humbrol 83 Ochre then the tyres brush painted with 67 Tank Grey while attached to the sprues. They were then clipped, assembled and the paint touched up. Building the tracks was done before the superstructure (which incorporated the track guards) was fitted to the hull, this made fitting the upper track runs much easier. Unlike on some Tamiya models, the roadwheels do not use polycaps, so to fit the tracks the wheels were temporarily held in place with Blu-Tack. I assembled the tracks in runs of about 10-15 links at a time then fixed each joint with a dab of Tamiya Extra Thin Liquid Cement, in this way the whole bottom runs of track were built up first. The tracks were aligned along a straight edge and left for about ten to fifteen minutes; at this point the glue had set enough to handle them but was still pliable and they could be fitted to the wheels and held in place with Tamiya tape. I then left the assembly to set thoroughly overnight, and then repeated the procedure for the top runs. Getting the track sag right makes a big difference to the realistic look of the track; photographs show that mid-war Pz.Kpfw.IV tracks were usually fitted quite tight with minimal sag.

When thoroughly set, the tracks were removed for painting later. I usually dab them with red and green paint at this stage so that I remember which are left and right - they don't necessarily fit if transposed!

PAINTING & MARKINGS

I used the Echelon sheet AXT35-1020 for the markings. This contains several options for vehicles of the 6th Panzer Division in Russia, summer 1943. I chose 'Black 632' as it did not have some of the non-standard features seen



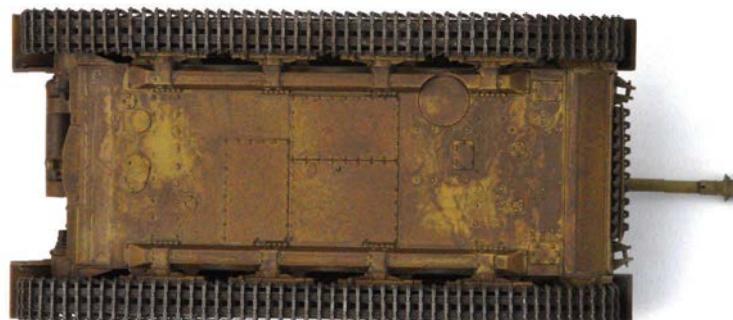
The Pz.Kpfw.IV turret alongside the Pz.Kpfw.III turret in the basic overall colour of Humbrol 83. The Tamiya cupola has open vision slots while the Mig version is closed. I prefer the Tamiya rendition, but attempts to cast it were not successful.



Sprayed overall in Humbrol 83 Ochre – this is the same as the old Authentic HPI German Camouflage Yellow. Wheels and tracks have been fitted and the tools painted with Humbrol 53 Gunmetal and Humbrol 118 Tan for the wooden handles. The exhaust and remaining tools were attached and the model received an overall coat of Tamiya Acrylic X-22 Gloss Clear and the decals applied. The decals were then oversprayed with more X-22 to give a consistent finish for the weathering.



Rear plate after decaling and weathering. The exhaust muffler was painted in I70 Brown Bess, then when thoroughly dry overnight overpainted with I13 Rust and immediately dabbed with a paper towel to give a mottled rust effect. The exhaust stub was given a wash of thinned 33 Black. The convoy light above the left mudguard is green, not red.



The underside post-weathering. I have never seen underneath a real tank but I should imagine it is pretty dirty, so it received a heavy wash of 29 Dark Earth. Also visible is the 56 Aluminium drybrushed track pads.



A failed attempt at casting the Tamiya Panzer III cupola. This larger part came out distorted due to shrinkage of the resin as it cures. I will attempt this again in the future by making the mould wall thicker to resist distortion. It might also be worth trying 'building up' the part from successive thinner layers of resin.



Front view of the completed model. Modifications visible are the second Bosch headlamp, the modified applique armour plates, the Mig heavy bolted final drive guards and the modified towing bracket pins. The spare track links were painted in the same basic colour as the tracks but without the bright metal drybrushing and a hint of rust added with small random dabs of 113 Rust and 82 Orange blended in with enamel thinners.



Upper right front 3/4 view nicely shows the resin antenna mount, Bosch headlamp, spare track brackets and revised tool stowage.



Upper left rear 3/4 view showing the resin turret features as well as the piano wire replacement handles and rear plate towing cable brackets. The kit provides string to form the cable, but I will use braided wire when I get some.

on the others.

The Echelon instructions show a subtle olive green mottle on all of these vehicles; however a widely reproduced photograph in the New Vanguard book shows two Ausf. G from this unit, 923 (included on the sheet) and 9-- that both appear to be in a single colour. Also these tanks feature factory data blocks on the turrets which would almost certainly have been painted over with any application of mottle. For these reasons I decided to apply an overall Dark Yellow scheme.

I take a very simple approach to painting and weathering. I still use Humbrol Enamels almost exclusively. They brush and spray well and, provided you replace the lids properly, they keep almost indefinitely - I have used tins that must be nearly thirty years

old! Unlike acrylics and some other enamels, when fully dried (24 hours) they are moderately resistant to liquid cement, so small parts can be safely fixed after painting.

Their other very useful property is their adhesion to plastic, which is second to none. This is important when attaching pre-painted parts with cyanoacrylate, as the weakest part of the joint is actually the bond between paint and plastic.

I started the paint job by priming the metal additions with Warhammer 'Chaos Black' from the spray can; I find that this product has better adhesion to metal than others I have tried. Then, after washing in dilute detergent and air drying, the hull and turret received a solid airbrushed coat of Humbrol 83 Ochre. This is an exact match

for the old Humbrol Authentic HP1 'German Overall Sand' (I can confirm this, I still have a tin!). The tracks including the spares were sprayed in Humbrol 251, which is actually a Luftwaffe camouflage colour - RLM81 Dunkelbraun. It is a sort of dark greyish brown with a slight purple tinge that I think represents dirty dull steel quite well.

The tracks but not the spares were then drybrushed with 56 Aluminium on the ground contact surfaces and guide horns as well as the teeth of the drive sprocket.

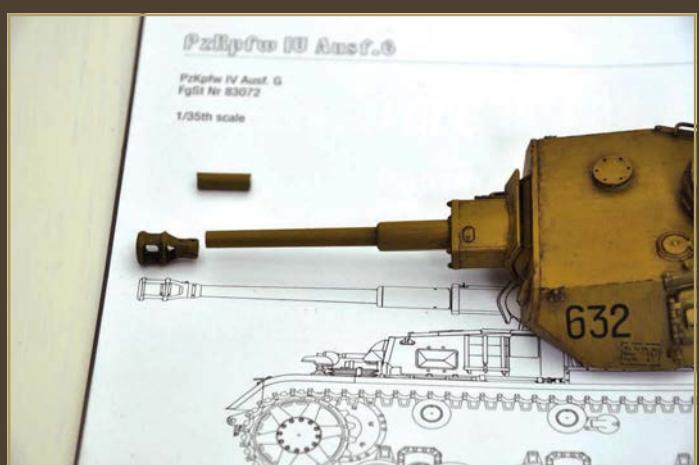
Details were then brush painted; Humbrol 53 Gunmetal to represent 'blued' steel OVM tools and machine gun barrels, 118 Tan for the wooden tool handles and 131 Green for the windows in the rear convoy light.

The exhaust muffler was painted in 170 Brown Bess and allowed to dry overnight, then given a coat of 113 Rust which was immediately dabbed with a paper towel to give a mottled rusty effect.

The wheels and tracks were then fitted, cyanoacrylate was used to fix the painted tracks to the wheels, any excess glue disappears under the subsequent varnish coat. After the final bits and pieces were attached the whole model got a coat of Tamiya X-22 Gloss Clear diluted 1:1 with Tamiya Acrylic Thinner and a dab of washing-up detergent. Decals were then applied. The Echelon decals are printed by Microscale so are top quality. As they were all applied to flat surfaces, they required no setting solutions. My only criticism of them is that the



I should have done this much earlier! To make the aluminium Aber L/48 barrel into an L/43 barrel I cut a section out immediately behind the muzzle brake using the Photogallery plans as a guide; an ordinary X-Acto razor saw cut the aluminium barrel readily. It is very important to make the cut dead square. I then removed any burrs with a jeweller's diamond file. The Aber muzzle brake is conspicuously larger than the one supplied in the kit, but closely resembles the one fitted to the Panzermuseum vehicle.



To re-attach the muzzle brake I found a piece of 2mm diameter wire that fitted the bore nicely. I then drilled a hole in the solid barrel with a 2mm HSS drill bit, at first in a pin vice to make sure it was dead centre, then I deepened it to 3-4mm with a motor tool on the slowest speed. Before assembling with cyano glue, I painted the end of the pin matt black so it would not be seen down the barrel. The paintwork was then lightly touched up by brush.



designs are packed so tightly that it is very difficult to cut them out without damaging them.

A second coat of X-22 just over the decals ensured a uniform surface for the weathering. To give a generally grubby look to the model, I applied a dilute wash of Humbrol 251 (my new favourite colour!) to all upper surfaces using a broad, flat brush. I used a second, clean brush to remove much of it again, always working vertically to give a rain-streaked appearance. When I was satisfied with this I then applied a wash of Humbrol 29 Dark Earth to the undersides, tracks and the hull below the track guards. I wanted this to represent a buildup of dry summer dust rather than thick mud. This time I used my airbrush so as to get in behind the wheels and above the tracks. Again I removed excess with a dry brush or paper towel.

The wheels were given the same treatment but done with the

model on its side; otherwise the wash tends to pool unrealistically at the bottom. Finally I applied a wash of 33 Black to the MG barrels, vision slits, the exhaust stub and a couple of places on the suspension to represent oil leaks. I took the latter from photos in the PhotoGallery book, the places most affected being the centre pivot bosses of the bogie units and the large adjustment bolts on the track tensioning gear of the trailing idlers.

The whole model was then sprayed with Humbrol Matt Cote diluted 1:1 with Humbrol Enamel Thinners. This stage always makes me a little nervous as I have had disasters in the past with the dreaded 'frosty' look. I avoid matt acrylic varnish now as this seems to be the most prone to the problem. So far I have been 100% successful with Matt Cote, the trick is to use fine mist coats that dry almost immediately so as to avoid pooling in corners. Also I stir the

diluted Matt Cote in the airbrush cup occasionally to prevent settling of the matting agent. Finally I added some paint chipping, concentrating on the exposed edges, crew access hatches and handles. For this I used a mixture of 251 (again) and 33 Black applied with a fine pointed brush. I have tried this technique before but had never been satisfied with the appearance. This time I was quite pleased with the effect, although I lost count of the number of times I wiped it off and started again! The important thing is to keep the chipping as fine as possible. No chipping on the antenna trough or stowage bin insulators – they are made of painted wood!

Now the model was finished – apart from that gun barrel! I had foolishly left it until now in the hope that perhaps it wasn't noticeable, but at 12mm too long it just didn't look right. So armed with the PhotoGallery plans, I cut

the barrel 36mm from the front lip of the recoil sleeve using a standard X-Acto razor saw, and again at the muzzle brake joint. The muzzle brake was re-joined to the truncated barrel by drilling and pinning. For all my trepidation, the surgery turned out to be quite straightforward, and it is surprising how much difference this small correction makes to the appearance of the tank.

This project rapidly expanded from what I had originally expected and took much longer than anticipated, but in the end I found it much more satisfying than a straight build. I am particularly pleased with the resin castings. No additional stowage, no complicated weathering, no open hatches and no crew! This is partly because I like to see the vehicle itself, partly because figure painting is not something I am good at, but mainly because the 'Loft of Shame' is embarrassingly full, and I need to press on! ■





AI Bowie examines the latest 1:35 scale M4 Sherman combination from Asuka.

PULLMAN M4

When Tasca started this range (now carried on by Asuka) it was always hoped an M4 would join the stable and modellers quickly worked out they could make an M4 using the hull in the M4A2 Sherman III kit (35-08) and the lower hull parts of their M4A2 which shared the same manufacturer (Pullman) in real life. Asuka has now worked out they can mix and match the parts they manufacture to give even more variants and this kit is such an example with the Pullman hull from the Sherman III and lower hull parts from the M4A1 kits. They have answered a lot of requests by Sherman modellers and offered the mid-production D 50878 turret with this release, which is a first in a standard 75mm turret in plastic.

The kit comprises approximately 540 parts in an olive coloured plastic, although many of these are not used and a large number of very useful spares will be left over for other Sherman projects. As is the norm for a TASCA Sherman kit clear parts and photo-etch are also included. Most of the kit is made from existing Tasca sprues however a new non riveted lower hull is supplied and the one-piece final drive assembly (E 4186).

The turret is very well done although I noticed there were no casting marks that are prominent on the bustle of the real thing. This same turret is included in Asuka's 35-034 M4 Composite although it has the later cupola and includes the thickened cheek of the mid production low bustle turret. The kit offers the D69993 Commander's cupola and

periscopes are included as either OD plastic or clear plastic and photo-etched perscope guards are included. The excellent Tasca .50 cal MG is included as well as a full figure of the tank Commander in coveralls with fibre CVC helmet.

The hull is the major feature of this kit and whilst it was included in the earlier Sherman III (35-018) kit it matches a Pullman manufactured welded hull with cast hoods very well. The subtle shape of the hoods is very well done and captures the look of the real items. The cast effect is subtle and on par with effect in earlier TASCA Shermans. Cast numbers match perfectly in position and layout to the example I have had access to but there are none on the transmission housing.

Like most TASCA Shermans they have omitted the welds that join the glacis to the hull sides and this is particularly noticeable on the hull side. The applique plates have the welds already included but to me are understated.

The suspension is mid-production VVSS. A full set of both upswept (late) and horizontal return roller arm bogies are included and full sets of spoked and pressed road wheels are also included.

Two styles of track skids are supplied. The tracks represent the T 51 rubber block type which was commonly seen on US M4s. These are in the two sections per run. The suspension is workable although no foam or rubber is provided as the "Spring" however TASCA/ASUKA have been listening and now offer plastic blocks to be used in the suspension if you do not want it

to articulate like the real thing. This is a good idea as it is very difficult to get it correct and the suspension sags over time.

The rear of the hull is detailed and has the exhaust deflector plate and mesh screening found under the rear hull overhang which is finely done with the frame as a separate part to the PE. Both Round and Square Air Filters are included.

Decals are fairly sparse and cover only a single US vehicle: "Fay" F Coy 66 Tank Regiment, 2 Armoured Division Normandy July 44.

Markings are supplied for this vehicle and match a known photo of this tank. A separate sheet offers an alphabet of numbers and stars you can put together to match another vehicle although they are missing the Delta from the bumper codes.

Bonus parts - Asuka offer a very nice "Rhinoceros" hedge cutter which gives the modeller an option to do a different Normandy period M4 or M4A1 76.

Asuka's first M4 variant offers a very well-engineered rendition of a typical mid production Pullman M4 typical of those that fought in Normandy and France in 1944. It is not without omissions but what omissions are listed above are all within the easy reach of the modeller I was both impressed and disappointed by this kit but in all honesty this is still a great kit and a very welcome release. Asuka can use this with other existing parts to create a welded hull Sherman Firefly Ic and I hope it is released with further marking options. ■

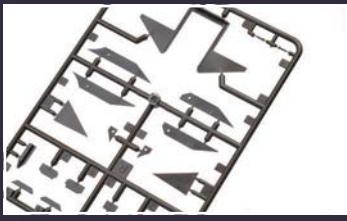
Sample purchased by reviewer.



The one-piece upper hull.



The turret is very well done.



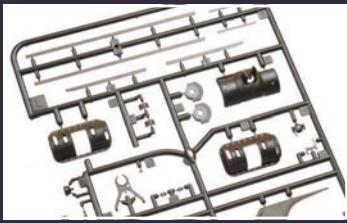
A Culin hedgehog cutter is included as an option.



The cast transmission cover.



Optional mantlet parts are included...



...and yet more mantlet parts.



Separate turret cheek armour parts are included.



The kit decals, including a useful number jungle.



SAUMUR INTERNATIONAL MODELLING EXHIBITION 2016

Pawel Rzymski reports from a very exotic model show venue, the Saumur Tank Museum

The Saumur Tank Museum, located in France, is one of the most interesting of its kind.

It has an amazing collection of armoured vehicles including a whole plethora of modern, but particularly WWI and even more

WWII tanks.

Just to name few of them: St Chamond, Schneider, B1 Bis, Panzer IV, Panther, Brumbar, Jagdpanther, Tiger I and even a King Tiger in running condition! Everyone can find something to his taste no doubt about it. But

the museum has also another very important role. At least for we modellers.

Each year (always the weekend preceding the Whit Monday) the museum opens its doors to our modelling family and hosts the biggest French modelling

exposition. Modellers come to this two days event from all over France. It is not rare to see visitors from Spain, Belgium even Holland or England. Of course the most numerous exhibitors come from the French modelling clubs and forums.



Live presentation on how to create rust at the Warpaints stand.



The Warpaints stand (mind the war rations between two Marders!)



The Radio Control stand captured the attention of younger visitors.



Panther Ausf.G in the marshalling area.

For the second time I had the pleasure to exhibit some of my models with my friends from Warpaints.net. Over 26 meters of table space! This year special event on Warpaints.net stand: live presentations of how to create rust, how to take pictures, how to paint figures and how to solder photo etched elements. Those presentations met real audience so the show will go on next year for sure.

But why is the show so popular? Well, just imagine the unique atmosphere when you are permitted to place your models on a table immediately between a Pak 40 Anti-Tank Gun and Marder II or even between King Tiger and Panther. Well, isn't that enough? Here goes - more! During the show, once per day dynamic demonstrations of tanks and armoured vehicles are organized just in front of the museum. Each year spectators can enjoy watching tanks riding in front of them. What a great experience it is to listen to the roaring engine of a tank just few meters from you. And the fumes!! Better take a gas mask if you don't like inhaling them.

This year's special guests:

- Renault R35

- Panzer II Luchs
- T34-85
- M24 Chaffee
- M10 TD
- M107 Priest
- PzKpfw V Panther

A modelling exposition is also the place where you can replenish your stock if needed - the stash always needs something new, doesn't it? There is always the commercial area in two big halls. Many sellers more and less known come to the show. Just to name few: Ammo Mig, AK Interactive, Blitz, Paper Panzer Productions, Resicast, Gaso.Line, Azimut and the list goes on and on.

All in all I must say it was a very interesting weekend. A great opportunity to meet friends and touch and feel the real stuff.

The exposition is a great modelling event which can take place thanks to the good will and comprehension of the museum's direction, the Saumur Tank Museum Association, the museum's staff including as well office employees as technicians who take care of the vehicles and a dozen of volunteers often modellers like you and me.

Thank you all once again and see you next year!! ■



Luchs underway.



Renault R35.



M10 Tank Destroyer.



M24 Chaffee.



T-34/85 Soviet medium tank.



Panther on the prowl!



Extreme security measures...



Plenty of opportunity to stock up on supplies.



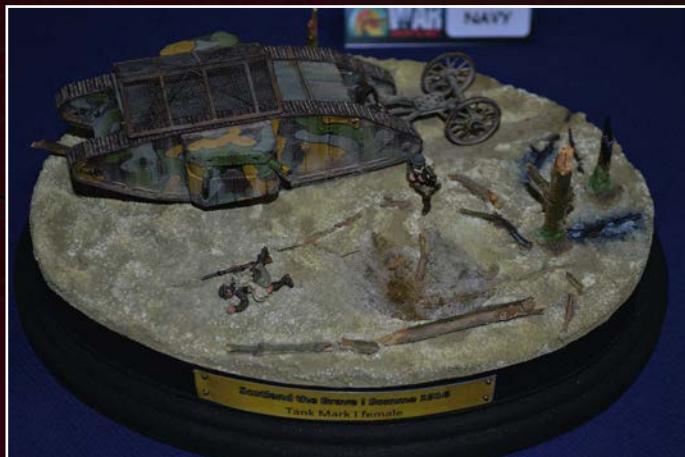
Leopard as display shelf.



Model Military International had a small presence at the show too!



M51 Super Sherman.



Tank Mark I Female.



M36B1 Jackson.



KV-85.



A lovely rusty Fiat 500.



An impressive WWI diorama featuring two Renault FTs.



A7V "Mephisto" captured by 26th Batt. Australian Imperial Force.



Jagdpanzer 38 sIG 33/2.



GTU-I Dozer (based on a T-55 chassis).



BRITISH BATTLE TANKS WORLD WAR I TO 1939

BY DAVID FLETCHER
OSPREY PUBLISHING

ISBN: 978 1 4728 1755-6

David Fletcher MBE is well known to anyone with an interest in British AFVs and continues to add to the available knowledge pool on British armour with his latest title devoted to British Tanks of WWI to the outbreak of WW2.

David, in association with the Tank Museum Bovington, has already written many soft cover OSPREY books on subjects within this timeframe and this new hard cover title is a compendium of those titles with some additional information.

Despite being the first to bring the tank to the battlefield, not much in the way of good references is available on the subject of British WWI armour and even less than that of the interwar period. Most of what has been released (with the exception of the individual Osprey New Vanguard titles) is long out of print, expensive and difficult to locate. With the 100th anniversary of the tank's first combat just passed, it is pleasing to see this title that addresses the lack of good reference.

This compendium packs a lot into its 233 pages and will not disappoint anyone with an interest in the development of the British tank or the history of armoured warfare.

The book is divided chronologically into ten Chapters:

1. The Tank Idea
2. In the Beginning – Prototypes and Marks I, II and III
3. Mark IV Tank
4. Mark V Tank
5. Medium Mark A Whippet
6. Wartime Prototypes: Marks VI, VII, Heavy Marks VIII & IX
7. The End of the War and New Beginnings
8. Vickers Mediums
9. 1930s Tank Developments: The Countdown to War
10. Light Tanks 1927-45 Marks I-VI

This book is not only a study of British battle tanks but it is also the history of the beginnings of the tank and the building blocks of future tank development.

As indicated it contains a number of previous Osprey New Vanguard titles however it also contains information not covered in those and covers a subject not available as a separate title – the Vickers Medium. As with all David Fletcher titles I have read, it is well backed by good research and is in an easily readable style of writing that will satisfy the novice and pedant alike. This is not the be all and end all reference on the subjects and would be considered an excellent overview or primer on the subject until more in depth studies become available (it's only been 100 years!).

This title offers excellent value for money and valuable reference for the modeller, historian and armour enthusiast. Its colour plates are all preserved from the original titles and it also offers the benefit of a hard cover. The Author is an acknowledged specialist in British armour and has used his association with the Bovington Tank Museum to the reader's advantage, providing a quality but budget priced reference on such an important subject in the history of armoured warfare. I cannot recommend this enough particularly with all the new WWI and Between war British Armour subjects being kitted these days.

Highly Recommended.

Available online from Osprey Publishing and specialty book shops worldwide www.ospreypublishing.com

Al Bowie

FIRING NOW

BY DICK TAYLOR
MMP BOOKS GREEN SERIES NO. 4120
ISBN: 978-83-63678-91-3

Dick Taylor embarked on a monumental task with his four volume Warpaint series that extensively covered the colour and markings of British armoured vehicles. He continues this theme with a comprehensive title covering the Ammunition types of those British and American armoured vehicles in World War Two.

Again, the Author has used his intimate knowledge of the British Army and his research skills as a historian to deliver another detailed reference. To my knowledge this is the first time the subject has been tackled except as part of general titles covering many nations and I commend the author for tackling it in detail. He makes the comment in his introduction that this is the whole purpose of the gun or tank is to deliver the ammunition to the right place and the right time. The sheer scope of the subject limits what can be achieved and Dick is making available to the reader the closest thing to a complete single reference on the subject. I honestly would not have thought this was such an interesting subject but have to say this was a very interesting and enjoyable read.

This volume mainly covers a variety of subjects and is broken down into Chapters on the subjects detailing:

• Part 1 - Ammunition

- Components, Function, Terminology and Abbreviations
- Terminology
- Accuracy, consistency and penetration
- Packaging, storing and transporting ammunition

• Part 2 - British ammunition natures

- Introduction
- The 1944 System
- .55 Boys AT Rifle
- 3 Pounder and 3.7" Close Support Howitzer
- 3" Close Support Howitzer
- 2 Pounder
- Hotchkiss 25mm
- 6 Pounder (& US 57mm)
- 17 Pounder
- 77 mm
- 95mm Close support howitzer
- 25 Pounder
- 32 Pounder
- 29 mm Blacker Bombard
- PIAT
- 290 Petard

• Part 3 - US Ammunition Natures

- Introduction
- 2.36" Rocket Launcher (Bazooka)
- 37 mm
- 75 mm & 75 mm (British)
- 3 Inch
- 76 mm
- 90 mm
- 105 mm

Like its predecessors, this volume is thorough and Lt. Col Taylor's research presents the reader with data well supported by photographs in both black and white and colour. Primary sources are the basis of most of the information and I like the fact that, unlike other authors, he does not categorically state something based on a single source or interpretation of official documents or photographs; but is measured in presenting the most credible outcome whilst remaining open minded as to interpretation. Again the photographic smorgasbord presented in this book has been well selected to illustrate the information presented by the author and is presenting a lot of rarely seen photos.

The chapters are packed with detail and illustrated with period photos, photos of preserved items as well as coloured diagrams, sketches, illustrations etc. Some of the information is presented in detail for the first time and is quite interesting.

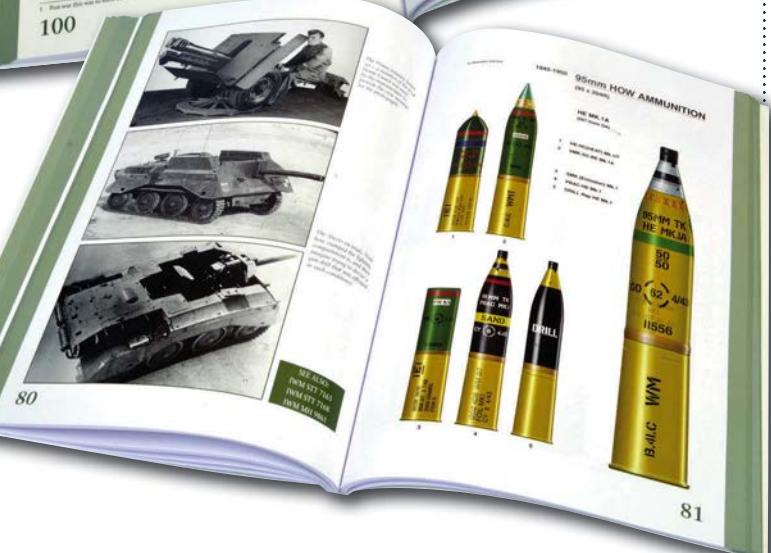
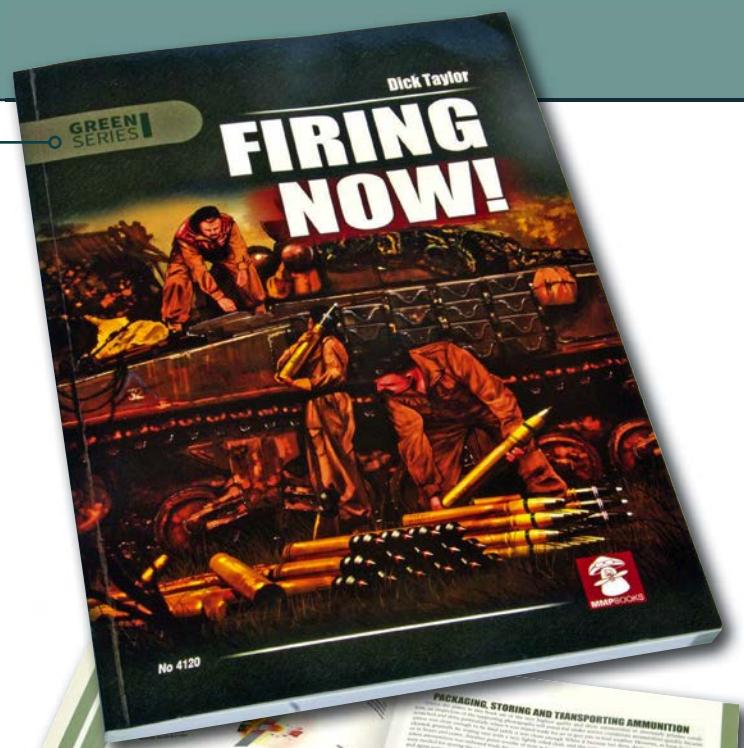
This is the first title that I have read that covers solely the British and US AFV ammunition in such detail and the information has been missing from the public arena for a long time. This will be invaluable to modellers, collectors and re-enactors amongst us and I look forward to seeing this information used to add some colour to what can be drab modelling subjects.

The Author is to be commended for this and its preceding titles that have gone a long way to providing a single reference on a hugely complex subject. As with the other titles, these are well laid out and indexed allowing for easy access to information. For anyone with an interest in British Armour or Military vehicles these titles are essential and no serious modeller of British Military vehicles should be without them. I cannot recommend these titles highly enough. Again I would recommend this book for those with an interest in British military vehicles whether as a modeller, historian, re-enactor or collector. It is well written, superbly researched and presented in an easy to read manner.

Highly recommended to the collector, modeller, wargamer or historian

Available online from MMP Books www.mmpbooks.com

Al Bowie



M1A2 SEP ABRAMS MAIN BATTLE TANK IN DETAIL

SABOT PUBLICATIONS

ISBN: 978-0-9973774-0-8

The M1A2 SEP is the current US MBT of choice serving with the US Army and the latest in a long line of the Abrams family. This last year has seen a number of model companies releasing state of the art kits of the M1A2 Sep with its various Tank Urban Survival Kit (TUSK) armour packages. We have seen stunning new tooling kits from MENG, Academy, Rye Field Models and the re-release of the excellent Dragon kit. To provide reference for modellers, MENG has teamed with SABOT Publications to release an excellent photographic study of these imposing AFV.

The book is a large A4 format softcover title on excellent quality glossy paper in full cover and is packed with 300 hi res and relevant walk around and in-action photos of a number of US Army M1A2 SEP's. The photo selection is diverse and show any number of configurations and colour schemes with and without the TUSK Armour. In addition there is a small history section and colour plates for three vehicles and plans although no scale is given.

This is a fantastic reference for anyone approaching the build of one of the new kits and the captions explain all the details found on the real vehicle including the interior and engine compartments.

This is highly recommended to modellers and armour enthusiasts.

This is the lead title from this new publisher and the next title is also a MENG Modelling subject, namely the M9 ACE.

Highly Recommended.

Available online from SABOT Publications www.sabotpub.com

Al Bowie



ITALERI GULF WAR ANNIVERSARY SET

1:72 SCALE

KIT NO. 6117

When I started writing up this review I did an internet search to find out more details of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to add a backstory to it. The invasion started on 2 August 1990. By remarkable coincidence, the date I am writing this is 2 August, 2016 and thus exactly 26 years to the day. There has been nothing in the news today to acknowledge this which I find disappointing. I actually remember the day and coming home from work to watch it all unfolding on the news.

Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait without notice using a force of around 100,000 soldiers and 700 tanks. The United Nations immediately declared a Resolution and placed economic sanctions on Saddam Hussein's Government. As a result, more than 30 countries deployed forces to create a Coalition with the aim to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait. The war began with an aerial and a naval bombardment and after five weeks it was followed by a ground assault. The Coalition forces were able to defeat the Iraqi forces and the rest is history.

Box Contents

In this box we get parts to represent four machines, each individually bagged, and these are:

AH-1W Super Cobra

This kit was originally released in 1987 and has been re-released and re-boxed regularly since then. It still looks good for its age and comes on two main sprues with a third for the canopy and totals 73 parts in all. Detail is all raised panel lines on the fuselage, a throwback to its age I guess. A detailed cockpit is provided comprising of seats, control panels & single control column although there is no detail on the inner fuselage sides nor are figures provided.

This thing comes fully armed with the Gatling gun up front being moveable and rocket pods & launchers provided for the stub wings. The canopy is nice & clear and will benefit from some careful painting. Markings for two U.S. Marine Corps machines are provided.

M1 Abrams MBT

This is, I believe, the old Esci kit that dates from 1986 that has been re-boxed by Italeri. Looking at the detail it represents an early Abrams so you will need to tweak some bits to make it a Gulf machine.

This is a simple kit comprising of 94 parts, 26 of which are given over to the link & length tracks. Detail is simple and there is a little bit of flash here & there to tidy, as well as sink marks to fill in the tracks. The road wheels are solid one-piece items but with the tracks and side shields in place it isn't too noticeable. The hull is made of separate parts to which you add the road wheels & tracks, then the upper hull & turret. Markings for two vehicles are provided.

T-62 MBT

Again, we have the Esci kit from the mid-1980s repackaged here. There are 130 parts in all with 48 given over to the link and length tracks. The detail remains good for its age but the entire running gear is very basic. The road wheels are moulded as single items and, along with the idlers & drive sprockets, are lacking any of the holes present on the original. The hull is made from separate parts and we get the external fuel tanks and an unditching beam at the hull rear. You will find some flash present, mainly on the tracks, and the odd sink hole here and there. We are offered markings for two vehicles.

Mi-25 Hind D

This kit is Italeri's own and was originally released in 1992. It still looks good for its age and comes on two main sprues with a third for the canopy totalling 132 parts in all. Detail is all raised panel lines on the fuselage and we get a detailed cockpit & crew compartment. The seats have some nice strap detail moulded in and there are control panels & control columns, although there is no detail on the inner fuselage sides nor are figures provided. Clear parts give us the windows and the large canopy. Markings for two versions finish it off.

Conclusion

As someone who grew up with Matchbox and Esci kits I have a certain familiarity with you we are given here. There is nothing new in the box and experienced modellers will struggle with the lack of fine detail and simplified bits, especially on the tanks. What we do get is adequate if dated, but all of the instructions are nice and clear with no obvious errors. This would be a great starter set to get someone into the hobby.

Graham Tetley. Thanks to The Hobby Company Limited for the sample www.hobbyco.net



The Hind's fuselage detail.



Hind Sprue shot.



Detail on the Abrams upper hull.



Close-up pf the Abrams' weapons.



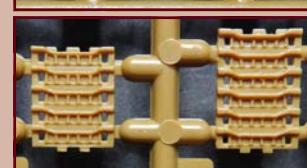
Abrams Track pad detail.



The T-62 hull detail.



T-62 wheel close-up.



T-62 Track detail.



Super Cobra sprue contents.



Marking options for all kits.



Figures - A round-up of the latest figure sets on release...



DRAGON

1:35 SCALE

WITTMAN'S ACE TIGER CREW • ITEM NO. 6831

Back in Issue 113 (September 2015), I reviewed Dragon's Wittman Command Tiger. When it was released, Dragon trumpeted that these figures were being included in the first release only but it was easy to see that they would be released as a separate set. So here we are. The set comprises of five figures, all posed for a propaganda photo and not in the poses as depicted on the box art. Whilst historically correct, I personally prefer the poses on the box art but it is not to be. There are 35 parts in the set and each figure comprises of individual legs, torso, arms, heads & headgear. On the sprue they look very well detailed with good facial features, excellent medal detail and sole lovely creases and folds on the uniforms. When you look a little closer though there are some issues that become apparent, the most obvious being that the sprue attachment points for five of the legs are right on the hip pocket flap. This means that detail is destroyed and has to be added back if you try cleaning up these attachment points. Next up are the mould seams which are very heavy on all parts, especially the shoes and the heads. Lastly, a lot of the folds and creases do not line up so you have to spend time carving & filling to get the best out of his set.

Construction

For the Wittman review I built the figures and the same comments apply here. Due to the poses with four of the five figures having arms outstretched it is very hard to get everything in place correctly. What I did was built the legs for all five figures first, stuck them to a rigid base with Blu-Tack and then carefully attached the torsos & arms. Unfortunately, the joins between the leg halves, torsos and arms are very woolly and many gaps are left that will need filling. Stick them with Blu-Tack before applying glue will help – that's what I did and then filled the gaps with Gunze Sangyo Mr Putty. The heads fit fairly well to the torso's but I found some gaps when fitting the headgear.

Conclusion

This is indeed a fine set of figures and in some very unique poses. I do have to say that, looking at the figures, I am rather bemused by the poses of figures A & B and the look of their left arms. Both appear to have a dislocated shoulder as the position of the shoulder relative to the arm just seems off to me. Although one does look like Wittman, you can basically use this for any tank crew posing for photos in your diorama. Fit of the parts leaves a lot to be desired and do be prepared for lots of cleanup to get them presentable. It is however the only game in town and for that reason I give it a 6/10 and a recommended.

Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company Limited for the sample www.hobbyco.net

Graham Tetley



NEUCRAFT MODELS

MODERN RUSSIAN TANKMAN A

1:35 SCALE

ITEM NO. 35001

Neucraft Models is a relatively recent company that offers figures and vehicles in various scales for wargamers and military modellers. Their latest 1:35 scale figure releases are:

- 35004 - WWII US Army Lieutenant
- 35005 - WWII Red Army Female Officer A, and
- 35004S- WWII US Army Lieutenant and Red Army Female Officer Set

Much in the same style as Alpine Miniatures, Neucraft offers these two figures singly or as a set of two.

The US Army Lieutenant is cast in one piece with a separate M1 Garand carbine. The female Red Army Officer is cast in one piece.

Both figures are well sculpted in fairly formal poses, as you might expect if these two armies were meeting for the first time.

Uniform fabric rendition and drape look good.

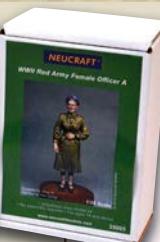
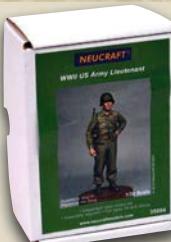
The faces are really well rendered too.

These are both interesting figures that suggest some unique diorama subjects with both American and Soviet vehicles as well as this pair.

Highly Recommended.

Available online from Neucraft Models www.neucraftmodels.com

Brett Green



Incoming

Military/Vehicles



ITALERI

1:56 SCALE

M10 TANK DESTROYER

KIT NO. 15758

Italeri's new range of 1:56 scale vehicles is aimed at the wargames market but, looking at what is available in this scale, it looks to be a popular area.

There is quite a large range of vehicles under the 'Warlord Bolt Action' label and it appears that Italeri is adding to this range with their own, newly tooled, kits. The latest release is an M10 Tank Destroyer and in the box we get two sprues with 66 parts and options for both an American or British M10.

The different options are created by simply having alternative crew figures in different uniforms and markings for three vehicles, although the decal sheet contains many more options.

The kit itself is very simple in its parts breakdown, in fact you should be able to build this in an hour or so. Instead of separate pieces, the entire suspension sides come all as one item but it does actually look quite convincing. With the tracks on, upper hull in place and some careful painting it will not be too noticeable. The tracks come on pre-shaped upper & lower runs with curved sections for the idlers & drive sprockets. The lower track runs are actually keyed into the road wheels so it is impossible to make a mess of putting them together. A simple fighting compartment floor is provided and all tools & tow cables are moulded directly onto the hull parts.

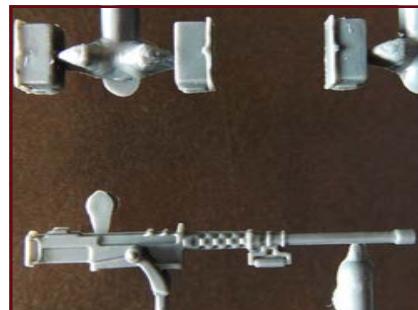
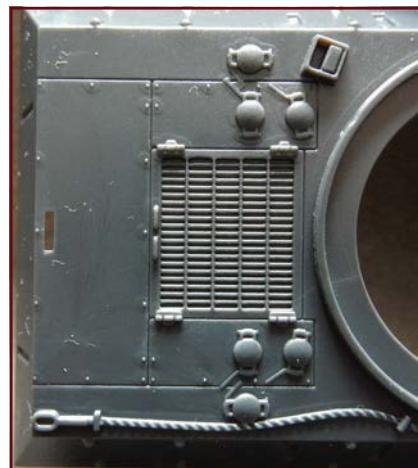
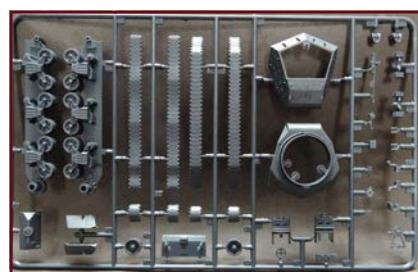
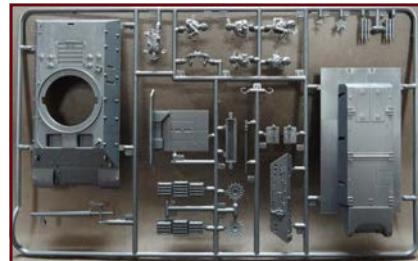
Some basic detail is provided for the turret containing of ammo stowage, some boxes, seats for the crew and the gun breach. A 3-man crew is provided of which two are cut off at the chest. You can have the driver's hatches open and modify one of the spare crew figures to fit if you wish.

Although aimed at wargamers, I cannot help but conclude that this would also make an ideal kit for first time modellers. In a lot of respects it is very similar to the 1:76 Matchbox and 1:48 scale Bandai kits of my youth that got me into the hobby. Detail is basic but it does not appear to be aimed at that section of the market. It will make an easy and fun build for beginner or wargamer alike and comes highly recommended from me.

Highly Recommended.

Thanks to The Hobby Company for the sample www.hobbyco.net

Graham Tetley



MIG AMMO

PAINTS

BLACK & WHITE SET

A MIG 7128

Mig Ammo is steaming ahead with many great products that it is hard to keep up. Here we have a set of acrylic paints in a box set containing shades of Black and white. This is quite a new technique made popular by talented modeller Jose Luis Lopez. I must say I am not that familiar with this, though the works I have seen done appear to be quite stunning.

In the box are six 17ml plastic dispensers with stirring balls inside. The colours included are as follows:

MIG 2016 Transparator, A MIG024 Washable White, A MIG104 Washable Black, A MIG 090 Satin Varnish, A MIG 046 Matt Black, and A MIG 050 Matt White. There are instructions on the rear of the box telling you how to use these paints and if followed correctly, one should have some pretty good results at the end. As mentioned, I am not that familiar with this technique although now, having these, it's time to study up more and give it a go.

Ammo of Mig is a high quality range of products and I am sure these as others will prove to be a useful set to those wondering about Black & White.

Recommended.

Thanks to Mig Ammo for the sample.

Andrew Judson



DARK STAR MINIATURES

PAINTS, MOLTEN METAL

PIGMENTS

Darkstar is a new name to me but after checking out the web page, I must say that I liked what I saw. They offer a range of figures, paints, pigments and other items. This time I am reviewing two colours from the Molten Metal Range being Brass, DM301 and Steel, Dm271. Having tried both, I found them to go on well with nice tone to the colours. They are an acrylic paint in a 17ml bottle with a shaker ball inside. When using I found they had to be shaken thoroughly to get a good effect. I will say, I hope to get some more in the future, a good metallic is hard to come by that does what it says.

Next I have two pigment colours, New Rust, and Sand. To be honest, I find these similar to use as other brands. They work well and the colours are rich when applying, but tone down well when excess is removed. As with others you can mix them to get your own tones. I think these are also a great item and will be keen to see what the full colour range will be.

The paints and pigments appear to be marketed towards the gaming fraternity, though as with all paints, can be used on whatever one desires them to. I think they are a great new brand on the market and look forward to upcoming releases.

Recommended.

Thanks to Dark Star for the sample.

Andrew Judson

FMW

PAINTS

CLEARS AND PRIMERS

I was handed these to do as a review, and my eyebrows raised right away - clears and a primer in acrylics. I always go towards acrylics because of where I model, having kids, and to avoid those horrendous smells enamel based produce.

Here I have three products, the first being Master Matt, a flat clear coat that may be applied by either brush or Airbrush. For the latter, its recommended to thin using distilled water. From the small test I did, a couple of coats will be needed for a good effect.

Second, I have a Master Gloss coat, also able to be applied by brush or Airbrush. It appears to have a nice finish when I tested it, though on a large surface like a car or bike, I don't know. Again, it seems it needs to be done in several coats as per the matt.

Lastly there is the master Primer. It is a light grey in colour, does not appear to be very thick and when applied looks as though it will not take away the finer details of that project you are working on. Its airbrushable, using distilled water as a thinner, and I like the fact as with the others, that there is basically no offensive odours after spraying.

From what I have looked at, and tested, these appear to be a nice, easy to use product and on that basis recommend these.

Recommended.

Thanks to FMW for the sample.

Andrew Judson





A CHAT WITH PHIL YOUNG



Luke Pitt interviews Phil Young, owner of Figures with Attitude.

As this is the Christmas edition, I thought I'd do something a little different and do a detailed interview with Philip Young from Figures with Attitude. I first became acquainted with Phil when I mentioned in one of my first columns that Mike Good had done a few 1:48 scale figure sculpts for Alpine Miniatures. He contacted me and I told him that I was finding it difficult to convince Alpine would cast and sell them. Phil took up the challenge and within months the figures were produced.

Impressed with what he had done, we engaged in many phone conversations afterwards. I would describe Phil as a "doer". While others sit on the fence and complain, Phil figures out ways it can be done and just gets on and does it. I admire his tenacity.

Phil lives in Naperville, IL (which is a suburb of Chicago). He's single parent with two sons who both attend college. Phil works as a Director of Strategy for an electric generating company. It's a great pleasure to interview him this month.

Luke: Hi Phil. Good to have you with us this month. Can you tell our readers what motivated you to start Figures With Attitude?

Phil: *Hi Luke. Thanks for having me. Over the years I've heard a lot of modellers discussing how the limited number of good figures in 1:48 scale was a drawback. I initially went on campaigns or was involved in trying to get prominent figure makers in 1:35 to produce some figures in 1:48 scale. That worked to a degree (Alpine, Evolution, Corsair Rex, Stalingrad, etc.), but ultimately I didn't think that was sustainable so I decided to take things into my own hands so to speak and see what could be done. A sort of DIY approach. Basically, I got sick of wasting my time and capacity focusing on what other people were or were not doing and just wanted to control my own destiny so to speak. I think the hobby in general could use a little bit more of that attitude.*

Luke: Yes, I remember that campaign with Alpine a few years back, I believe he sold all the figures he had too. You outsource all of the figures you sell. Can you explain this process?

Phil: *Sure. I have learned a lot in a relatively short time frame. I ultimately want to do some of my own sculpting, and some of the items we have created have that end goal in mind. But until then, I started to watch individuals and their sculpting. I then started to contact sculptors and see if they were willing to work with me.*

I have been turned down by some of the best in the industry because they are not willing to work in 1:48 and for others the price was just too high. I talked to a lot of sculptors from the gaming industry with the idea that 1:48 scale was about the same level of detail but just a different subject matter. But for the most part these folks are not interested in historical subjects and they demand a higher price. I eventually found some sculptors to work with and a few I specifically target based on style, subject matter, etc. To me engaging sculptors is one of the things I like the most about doing all of this.

Casting is the next step once the masters are done. Finding casters was not easy. Casting is an art form in itself and I didn't really know where to start. But I got some help through some hobby friends and have used multiple casters now. Casting I think is something a lot of people take for granted. I don't.

Luke: Interesting. What are the steps you follow?

Phil: *I think the best way to answer that question is to break it down into the following steps. The first is what I would describe as Background. I spend a lot of time looking at*

other's work, historical photos, art work, etc. Mainly I am looking for good poses. I have a huge archive of all types of photos. I don't look for photos of someone in a particular uniform etc. Just the poses. I then think of what themes I want to tackle. Basically this comes down to what I would want to build and paint. I like large groups of figures. That is one of the main advantages of 1:48 – smaller scale, good detail, and you can pack a lot into a relatively small space.

The second is the Theme. So, once I have a theme: (for example a STUG Crew or US Tankers in Summer Gear), I match the poses I want with the uniform references. I detail these out using down loaded pictures of each figures pose and uniform type. And that is what I give to the sculptor. I cannot draw, so I add instructions to each figure to describe what I am looking for – usually with applicable references. It is amazing how complicated getting uniform details right can be.

The third is "Sculpting". I provide the details to the chosen sculptor, and they start to work. Some provide in-progress shots, and some know what I want and they provide photos of a finished master. If I have any comments or want tweaks done, I provide them that feedback. It is very interesting creating something with someone thousands of miles away and not speaking their native language. It is very fulfilling.

The fourth is "Casting". Once I have a group that completes a theme, I arrange for casting. In some cases I might have to re-engineer a master based on how the caster needs it for getting good casting. Casters usually take care of gating the parts up.

The last is the "Release". Once I have a large group of items casted, I put a message out on Facebook and a couple other forums of what is ready for purchase. I don't have a website, I don't do box art and I don't have fancy packaging because I am trying to keep cost low and put the value into the subjects and the casting. I usually release a lot at once. My theory is shipping cost (especially shipping outside the US) are so high that if someone wants to get these items, they are not going to want to spend multiple shipping fees. I have thought of finding someone in Europe to distribute, but that has headaches too. We will see.

This is the process that I follow. I am sure there are other figure producers that might do it differently, but this is my way. I am still learning.

Luke: Wow, that's a full time job! Who do you admire most in the figure sculpting community?

Phil: *I admire all sculptors. Anyone who can sculpt I admire. I love sculptors and I probably follow sculptors the way others follow their*

favourite sports team athlete.

I have multiple answers. Not sure if you will have enough room. I will limit my answers to sculptors who focus mainly on full figures. Bust sculptors I will exclude, but there are equally good ones there (like Carl Reid, etc.). I just do not enjoy busts - yet.

For overall inspiration: Bill Horan. I am relatively new to the hobby and in 2011 I saw a piece by Bill Horan at the Chicago Figure Show called "Enfilade Fire". Man it opened up my eyes to a whole new world of figures and what is possible with sculpting. Most people would consider his "Last Stand at Gandamak" as one of the pinnacles of the hobby, but for me "Enfilade Fire" is it, with its compact composition and emotion - just wonderful. Anyway, Bill Horan, I admire his knowledge of posture and his focus on the face and hands.

For dramatic poses: absolutely John Rosengrant. Just a knack for capturing emotion in a normal stance. So much life comes through with his sculpting. Very subtle but effective.

For clothing folds and drapery: Mike Good. He is the master of drapery and folds accentuated by his awesome knowledge of body proportions and posture. Getting wrinkles right can make or break a figure. I get to talk to him from time to time which is a real treat for me.

For overall subject matter diversity and combination of all the above (there are more but I limited my list to a few - pretty obvious choices as you will see):

Sergey Traviansky (Evolution and others) - body language, clothing folds, faces
Alexander Zelenkov (Stalingrad) - figure interaction, large groups but each figure has a personality, very prolific

Dmitry Shevzov (Minisoldier and others) - really like his clean style and faces, awesome drapery

Vladimir Demchenko (Bravo 6) - body language, figure interaction/grouping

Hiroki Hayashi (Brick Works and others) - sculpting female subjects

Nino Pizzichemi (Tommy's War) - characteristic faces, body language
Taesung Harmms (Alpine) - poses, impeccable standards

1:48 scale and below: Boris Knokhov. Nobody achieves scale fidelity at these smaller scales like Boris. Impeccable knowledge of WWII German uniforms. Another category that I should mention is sculptors who are not sculpting for companies, but for their own projects and to me these guys are equally impressive and are the masters of vignettes and dioramas - Kazuya Yoshioka, Per Olav Lund, Johan Fohlin, Roger Hurkmans, and Luc Klinkers. There are so many others and I have not even discussed gaming sculptors that I like. I could fill 3 pages with this question. And then equally important are figure painters, but I will save that for maybe another time.

Luke: Indeed. Really good sculpting is an art form within itself. And along similar lines, who do you admire in the 1:48 scale community?

Phil: Luciano Rodriguez - a true ambassador of the scale. And his brother Alvaro does great work also. Of course Pat Johnson - just a cool guy and his work is truly inspirational. I admire Bruce Culver for his knowledge and his teaching. I admire your work and your dedicated use of figures and foliage. You have a knack for dramatic poses of figures which I appreciate. I admire Manel Arin's work with sculpting a lot of Gasoline's figures and his own line Total War Miniatures. In fact, he is a main inspiration for what I am trying to do. I admire what Nigel Savage has done with his Parabellum line of 1:48 figures. He has made really big groups of subjects and again he is a big inspiration for what I am trying to do. I consider both those guys good friends and colleagues. I admire all those folks on Track48 for keeping a spirit alive and really great work. Great group of folks. Kazuya Yoshioka stuff in 1:48 is incredible. So much good stuff coming out of Japan and France also.

Luke: I agree with all of your nominations (apart from the foliage guy). On a different subject, do you see a slowdown in the 1:48 military sector?

Phil: I do not. I actually think I see more people coming into the scale for various reasons. Lots of crossover with the gaming items also. This is a big advantage for 1:48 scale. 28mm size in gaming has actually grown to a lot of sci-fi figures being 32mm size (to the eye) which is about 1:48 scale. I pick up 32mm figures all the time for cross over potential.

Luke: Give me your thoughts on how we should grow the scale.?

Phil: Don't let what the manufacturers do and don't do stop you from getting what you want. Find other ways to get the subjects you want. And then build the heck out of stuff. Build it, paint it and show it off. Then do it again. I like the challenge of doing stuff in a smaller scale like 1:48.

Luke: What's next for Figures With Attitude?

Phil: Well, I have released about 20 figures and 2 replacement heads sets over the last couple of years. I have 20 more masters partially completed and 13 more masters being completed at the moment. I have one set of 10 additional heads mastered and 8 more masters being completed (3D printed). Oh yeah..I forgot I have these really cool Russian, German and US helmets done in 1:48 scale that are 3D printed scans of real helmets. These things are nice and are designed to fit my replacement heads. 20 other figures comprising of 2 themes that I am trying to line up a new sculptor to do. All 1:48 scale of course. And there are a couple of other really cool things I am working on currently that if I can do it would be new for the industry.

Luke: Thanks Phil. I have to say it - you have added value to the 1:48 scale community and I for one thank you for that. ■



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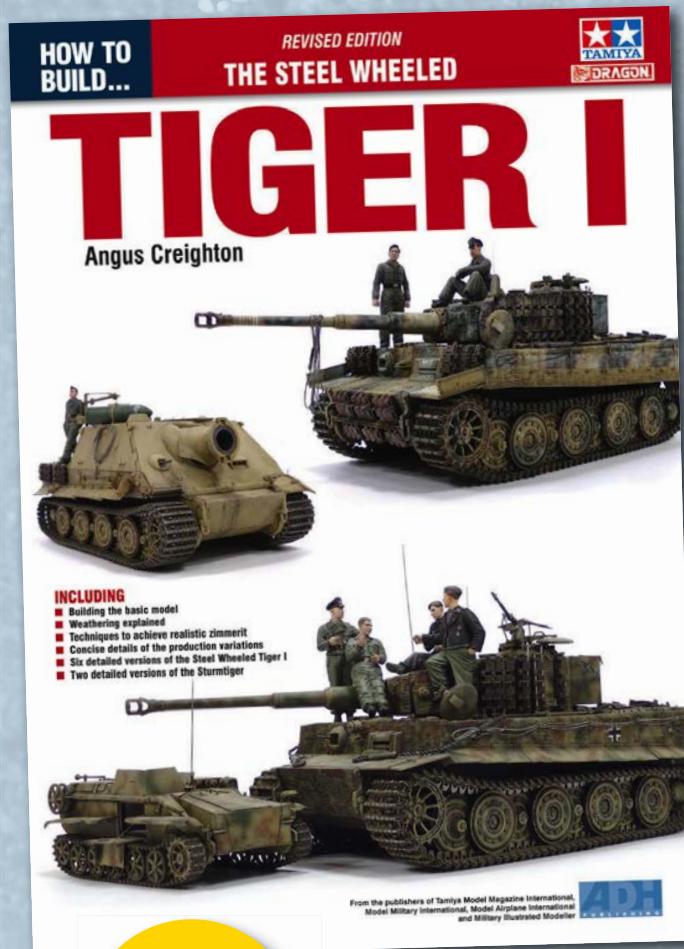
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The Last Post...



OSHKOSH BY GOSH!

Andy King examines the re-released Italeri M1120 HEMTT.

The M1120 HEMTT (Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck) is an eight wheeled vehicle built by Oshkosh Defence that has a load carrying system rather than a flat cargo bed at the rear. Originally M977 trucks had their cargo bodies and handling cranes removed and replaced with a multi-lift Mk5 load handling system. The first rebuilt M1120's entered service in 1999 with new build M1120's (designated A2 and now A4) appearing in 2004.

First appearing in the mid 1990s as the M977 this kit is a re-pop with new moulded parts for the load handling system and included in the box are five sprues in grey styrene, one clear sprue, nine vinyl tyres and a decal sheet. Moulding quality is not bad considering the age of the kit however there are sink marks around the cab door frames which will be difficult to fix and some very deep ones on part

F3. Mould pin marks are present but in areas that are hard to see such as the cab interior and chassis. Detail is what you would expect from a 20 year old kit especially in the cab as the instrument dials are moulded raised rather than decals, the two seats feature a heavy handed attempt at texture and the windscreens wipers are moulded integrally to the windscreens frame. The chassis is okay for what you can see and the bed for the load handling system has a nicely textured surface. For vinyl the tyres are very good with clear lettering and a rippled effect on the sidewalls. The tread pattern is chunky enough with only a single mould seam on one side around the circumference to remove. The transparencies are clear if a bit on the thick side but they are useable and the decal sheet, although small, is well printed, legible and in register.

Looking at the instructions and the chassis is a multi-part assembly so some care will be required to keep it all square and flat to avoid any fit problems and wonky wheels. Apparently you can fit the Italeri 20ft Military Container (kit number 6516 and available separately of course) on the back but there are many other load options that you could do as such as fuel tanks, palletised cargo and even various vehicles.

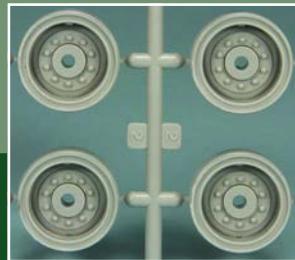
Painting and decaling options are for just two vehicles from Afghanistan during 2011, one in a three-tone camouflage scheme and the other in an overall sand. Federal Standard paint numbers are given along with colours from Italeri's own range.

Not a bad kit really but some aftermarket goodies wouldn't go amiss to bring it up to current standards. ■



Vinyl tyres.

Thanks to The Hobby Company Limited for the sample www.hobbyco.net



Wheel hubs.



Fabric seat texture.



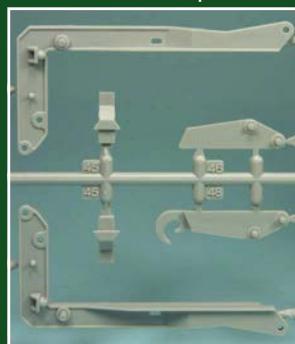
Doors.



The simple dashboard.



The integrated front hull, windscreens surrounds and windscreens wipers.



Chassis fittings.



Fuel drum halves.



Cargo bed floor.

#D3558 1/35

MIM-104B PATRIOT SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE (SAM) SYSTEM (PAC-1) with M983 HEMTT



Black Label is launching its most ambitious project yet in 1/35 scale and, appropriately, it's a model of a launcher! Item No.3558 depicts a plastic model of the MIM-104B Patriot surface-to-air missile (SAM) system complete with Launching Station mounted on an M860 semi-trailer and its associated M983 HEMTT tractor truck. The Patriot Advanced Capability-1 (PAC-1) was a SAM system with an anti-ballistic missile capacity. The MIM-104B anti-standoff jammer (ASOJ) missile allowed it to seek out electronic countermeasure emitters, and so it was an improvement over its predecessor. The trailer-mounted M901 Launching Station is a self-contained unit from which four MIM-104B missiles in canisters can be fired. The M901 includes all necessary items such as the 15kW Launcher Generator Set, and the Launcher Mechanics Assembly that elevates and rotates the canisters. The M860 semi-trailer is towed by the M983 tractor of the HEMTT (Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck) family, this being an 8x8 truck fitted with a fifth wheel. The Patriot, which was previously untested in combat, rose to fame during the Gulf War of 1990-91 when its ballistic missile defence function was exercised against Iraqi weapons more than 40 times.

This 1/35 scale Black Label model kit is fantastic in both its ambition and its execution, with the completed model impressive in its size and detail. Dragon's engineers have created an extremely accurate depiction of this massive combination of truck, trailer and missile launcher. Indeed, modellers can render this model in either transport configuration or in firing mode, making it ideal for a Gulf War diorama, for example. The M901 Launching Station can be posed with the missiles elevated and/or rotated for firing at the correct 38° angle, and with the trailer stabilizers extended. Integral components such as the antenna and generator are all included too, while the vehicle tyres are made from DS for extra realism. Detail such as the tread plate pattern is particularly well done. For modellers willing to launch into something absolutely stunning, this Patriot PAC-1 combination is simply unbeatable!



D3558

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 DRAGON

Seek & Destroy

The famed Tamiya 1/35 Military Miniature Series welcomes the first major U.S. tank destroyer – the M10 – into its ranks. This versatile AFV was developed largely to give U.S. forces a potential counter to the German armor tactics which proved successful in the early stages of WWII. After U.S. entry into the war, the M10 featured in action across North Africa and western Europe, its 3-inch gun and excellent maneuverability making it an asset for Allied forces. Relentless in our pursuit of realism, Tamiya has undertaken extensive study of a real M10 to bring you this fine rendering of the tank destroyer, that will be a valuable addition to your 1/35 scale collection.



U.S. TANK DESTROYER
M10
MID PRODUCTION



Length: 196mm
Width: 88mm

★2 marking options recreate
Tank Destroyer Battalion
M10s in WWII Europe.

★Marvelous interior detail includes gun breech, shells and more.

★In-depth examination of a real M10 led to this exceptionally accurate depiction of the M10 and its sloped armor. ★Mantlet and transmission covers feature depictions of cast metal surfaces. Fine weld lines are also captured. ★Driver's hatch can be assembled open or closed, and has separate periscope parts. ★Includes 3 figures in authentic pose for use in the turret.



★Realistic depiction of
vertical volute spring suspension bogies.

★Accurate belt-type recreations of T51 rubber block tracks.

1/35
SCALE

1/35 Military Miniature Series (Item 35350)
U.S. Tank Destroyer M10 (Mid Production)

Selected U.S. Subjects in Tamiya 1/35



U.S. Medium Tank M4A3E8 Sherman
"Easy Eight" European Theater (Item 35346)



M4A3 Sherman 75mm Gun Late Production
(Frontline Breakthrough) (Item 35250)



U.S. Medium Tank M26 Pershing (T26E3)
(Item 35254)

A number of potential diorama partner U.S. vehicles await in the superbly detailed 1/35 Military Miniature Series, such as the two iterations of the Sherman medium tank, or the M26 Pershing, all pictured here.


TAMIYA
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